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Mysteries of Udolpho.

Vol. 3. Ch. 1. P. 91.

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THE

MYSTERIES

OF

UDOLPHO,

A

ROMANCE;

INTERSPERSED WITH SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

BY

ANN RADCLIFFE,

AUTHOR OF THE ROMANCE OF THE FOREST, &c.

ILLUSTRATED WITH COPPER-PLATES.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

Fate sits on these dark battlements, and frowns,
And, as the portals open to receive me,
Her voice, in sullen echoes, through the courts
Tells of a nameless deed.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

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THE

MYSTERIES

OF

UDOLPHO.

CHAP. I.

"I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,
The moment on't; for't must be done to-night."

MACBETH.

EMILY was somewhat surprised, on the following day, to find that Annette had heard of Madame Montoni's confinement in the chamber over the portal, as well as of her purposed visit there, on the approaching night. That the circumstance, which Barnardine had so solemnly enjoined her to conceal, he had himself told to so indiscreet an hearer as Annette, appeared very improbable, though he had now charged her with a message, concerning the intended inter-

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view. He requested, that Emily would meet him, unattended, on the terrace, at a little after midnight, when he himself would lead her to the place he had promised; a proposal, from which she immediately shrunk, for a thousand vague fears darted athwart her mind, such as had tormented her on the preceding night, and which she neither knew how to trust, or to dismiss. It frequently occurred to her, that Barnardine might have deceived her, concerning Madame Montoni, whose murderer, perhaps, he really was; and that he had deceived her by order of Montoni, the more easily to draw her into some of the desperate designs of the latter. The terrible suspicion, that Madame Montoni no longer lived, thus came, accompanied by one not less dreadful for herself. Unless the crime, by which the aunt had suffered, was instigated merely by resentment, unconnected with profit, a motive, upon which Montoni did not appear very likely to act,

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its object must be unattained, till the niece was also dead, to whom Montoni knew that his wife's estates must descend. Emily remembered the words, which had informed her, that the contested estates in France would devolve to her, if Madame Montoni died, without consigning them to her husband: and the former obstinate perseverance of her aunt made it too probable, that she had, to the last, withheld them. At this instant, recollecting Barnardine's manner on the preceding night, she now believed, what she had then fancied, that it expressed malignant triumph. She shuddered at the recollection, which confirmed her fears, and determined not to meet him on the terrace. Soon after, she was inclined to consider these suspicions as the extravagant exaggerations of a timid and harrassed mind, and could not believe Montoni liable to such preposterous depravity as that of destroying, from one motive, his wife and her niece. She blamed herself for suffering her romantic

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imagination to carry her so far beyond the bounds of probability, and determined to endeavour to check its rapid flights, lest they should sometimes extend into madness. Still, however, she shrunk from the thought of meeting Barnardine, on the terrace, at midnight; and still the wish to be relieved from this terrible suspense, concerning her aunt, to see her, and to sooth her sufferings, made her hesitate what to do.

"Yet how is it possible, Annette, I can pass to the terrace at that hour?" said she, recollecting herself, "the sentinels will stop me, and Signor Montoni will hear of the affair."

"O ma'amselle! that is well thought of," replied Annette. "That is what Barnardine told me about. He gave me this key, and bade me say it unlocks the door at the end of the vaulted gallery, that opens near the end of the east rampart, so that you need not pass any of the men on watch. He bade me say, too, that his

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reason for requesting you to come to the terrace was, because he could take you to the place you want to go to, without opening the great doors of the hall, which grate so heavily."

Emily's spirits were somewhat calmed by this explanation, which seemed to be honestly given to Annette. "But why did he desire I would come alone, Annette?" said she.

"Why that was what I asked him myself, ma'amselle. Says I, Why is my young lady to come alone?—Surely I may come with her!—What harm can *I* do? But he said 'No—no—I tell you not,' in his gruff way. Nay, says I, I have been trusted in as great affairs as this, I warrant, and it's a hard matter if I can't keep a secret now. Still he would say nothing but—'No—no—no.' Well, says I, if you will only trust me, I will tell you a great secret, that was told me a month ago, and I have never opened my lips about it yet—so you need not be afraid of telling me. But all would

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not do. Then, ma'amselle, I went so far as to offer him a beautiful new sequin, that Ludovico gave me for a keep-sake, and I would not have parted with it for all St. Marco's Place; but even that would not do! Now what can be the reason of this! But I know, you know, ma'am, who you are going to see."

"Pray did Barnardine tell you this?"

"He! No, ma'amselle, that he did not."

Emily enquired who did, but Annette shewed, that she *could* keep a secret.

During the remainder of the day, Emily's mind was agitated with doubts and fears and contrary determinations, on the subject of meeting this Barnardine on the rampart, and submitting herself to his guidance, she scarcely knew whither. Pity for her aunt, and anxiety for herself, alternately swayed her determination, and night came, before she had decided upon her conduct. She heard the castle clock strike eleven—twelve—and yet her mind wavered. The time, however, was now come, when

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she could hesitate no longer: and then the interest she felt for her aunt overcame other considerations, and, bidding Annette follow her to the outer door of the vaulted gallery, and there await her return, she descended from her chamber. The castle was perfectly still, and the great hall, where so lately she had witnessed a scene of dreadful contention, now returned only the whispering footsteps of the two solitary figures gliding fearfully between the pillars, and gleamed only to the feeble lamp they carried. Emily, deceived by the long shadows of the pillars and by the catching lights between, often stopped, imagining she saw some person moving in the distant obscurity of the perspective; and, as she passed these pillars, she feared to turn her eyes toward them, almost expecting to see a figure start out from behind their broad shaft. She reached, however, the vaulted gallery, without interruption, but unclosed its outer door with a trembling hand, and, charging Annette not to quit it, and to keep it a little open, that she might be

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heard if she called, she delivered to her the lamp, which she did not dare to take herself, because of the men on watch, and, alone, stepped out upon the dark terrace. Every thing was so still, that she feared, lest her own light steps should be heard by the distant sentinels, and she walked cautiously towards the spot, where she had before met Barnardine, listening for a sound, and looking onward through the gloom in search of him. At length, she was startled by a deep voice, that spoke near her, and she paused, uncertain whether it was his, till it spoke again, and she then recognized the hollow tones of Barnardine, who had been punctual to the moment, and was at the appointed place, resting on the rampart wall. After chiding her for not coming sooner, and saying, that he had been waiting nearly half an hour, he desired Emily, who made no reply, to follow him to the door, through which he had entered the terrace.

While he unlocked it, she looked back to that she had left, and, observing the

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rays of the lamp stream through a small opening, was certain that Annette was still there. But her remote situation could little befriend Emily, after she had quitted the terrace; and, when Barnardine unclosed the gate, the dismal aspect of the passage beyond, shewn by a torch burning on the pavement, made her shrink from following him alone, and she refused to go, unless Annette might accompany her. This, however, Barnardine absolutely refused to permit, mingling at the same time with his refusal such artful circumstances to heighten the pity and curiosity of Emily towards her aunt, that she, at length, consented to follow him alone to the portal.

He then took up the torch, and led her along the passage, at the extremity of which he unlocked another door, whence they descended, a few steps, into a chapel, which, as Barnardine held up the torch to light her, Emily observed to be in ruins, and she immediately recollected a former

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conversation of Annette, concerning it, with very unpleasant emotions. She looked fearfully on the almost roofless walls, green with damps, and on the gothic points of the windows, where the ivy and the briony had long supplied the place of glass, and ran mantling among the broken capitals of some columns, that had once supported the roof. Barnardine stumbled over the broken pavement, and his voice, as he uttered a sudden oath, was returned in hollow echoes, that made it more terrific. Emily's heart sunk; but she still followed him, and he turned out of what had been the principal aisle of the chapel. "Down these steps, lady," said Barnardine, as he descended a flight, which appeared to lead into the vaults; but Emily paused on the top, and demanded, in a tremulous tone, whither he was conducting her.

"To the portal," said Barnardine.

"Cannot we go through the chapel to the portal?" said Emily.

"No, Signora, that leads to the inner

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court, which I don't choose to unlock. This way, and we shall reach the outer court presently."

Emily still hesitated; fearing not only to go on, but, since she had gone thus far, to irritate Barnardine by refusing to go further.

"Come, lady," said the man, who had nearly reached the bottom of the flight, "make a little haste; I cannot wait here all night."

"Whither do these steps lead?" said Emily, yet pausing.

"To the portal," repeated Barnardine, in an angry tone, "I will wait no longer." As he said this, he moved on with the light, and Emily, fearing to provoke him by further delay, reluctantly followed. From the steps, they proceeded through a passage, adjoining the vaults, the walls of which were dropping with unwholesome dews, and the vapours, that crept along the ground, made the torch burn so dimly, that Emily expected every moment to

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see it extinguished, and Barnardine could scarcely find his way. As they advanced, these vapours thickened, and Barnardine, believing the torch was expiring, stopped for a moment to trim it. As he then rested against a pair of iron gates that opened from the passage, Emily saw, by uncertain flashes of light, the vaults beyond, and, near her, heaps of earth, that seemed to surround an open grave. Such an object, in such a scene, would, at any time, have disturbed her; but now she was shocked by an instantaneous presentiment, that this was the grave of her unfortunate aunt, and that the treacherous Barnardine was leading herself to destruction. The obscure and terrible place, to which he had conducted her, seemed to justify the thought; it was a place suited for murder, a receptacle for the dead, where a deed of horror might be committed, and no vestige appear to proclaim it. Emily was so overwhelmed with terror, that, for a moment, she was unable to determine what

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conduct to pursue. She then considered, that it would be vain to attempt an escape from Barnardine, by flight, since the length and the intricacy of the way she had passed would soon enable him to overtake her, who was unacquainted with the turnings, and whose feebleness would not suffer her to run long with swiftness. She feared equally to irritate him by a disclosure of her suspicions, which a refusal to accompany him further certainly would do; and, since she was already as much in his power as it was possible she could be, if she proceeded, she, at length, determined to suppress, as far as she could, the appearance of apprehension, and to follow silently whither he designed to lead her. Pale with horror and anxiety, she now waited till Barnardine had trimmed the torch, and, as her sight glanced again upon the grave, she could not forbear enquiring for whom it was prepared. He took his eyes from the torch, and fixed them upon her face without speaking. She

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faintly repeated the question, but the man, shaking the torch, passed on; and she followed, trembling, to a second flight of steps, having ascended which, a door delivered them into the first court of the castle. As they crossed it, the light shewed the high black walls around them, fringed with long grass and dank weeds, that found a scanty soil among the mouldering stones; the heavy buttresses, with here and there between them a narrow grate, that admitted a freer circulation of air to the court, the massy iron gates, that led to the castle, whose clustering turrets appeared above, and, opposite, the huge towers and arch of the portal itself. In this scene the large, uncouth person of Barnardine, bearing the torch, formed a characteristic figure. This Barnardine was wrapt in a long dark cloak, which scarcely allowed the kind of half-boots, or sandals, that were laced upon his legs, to appear, and shewed only the point of a broad sword, which he usually wore, slung in a belt across his shoulders.

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On his head was a heavy flat velvet cap, somewhat resembling a turban, in which was a short feather; the visage beneath it shewed strong features, and a countenance furrowed with the lines of cunning and darkened by habitual discontent.

The view of the court, however, re-animated Emily, who, as she crossed silently towards the portal, began to hope, that her own fears, and not the treachery of Barnardine, had deceived her. She looked anxiously up at the first casement, that appeared above the lofty arch of the portcullis; but it was dark, and she enquired, whether it belonged to the chamber, where Madame Montoni was confined. Emily spoke low, and Barnardine, perhaps, did not hear her question, for he returned no answer; and they, soon after, entered the postern door of the gate-way, which brought them to the foot of a narrow staircase, that wound up one of the towers.

"Up this staircase the Signora lies," said Barnardine.

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"Lies!" repeated Emily faintly, as she began to ascend.

"She lies in the upper chamber," said Barnardine.

As they passed up, the wind, which poured through the narrow cavities in the wall, made the torch flare, and it threw a stronger gleam upon the grim and sallow countenance of Barnardine, and discovered more fully the desolation of the place —the rough stone walls, the spiral stairs, black with age, and a suit of ancient armour, with an iron visor, that hung upon the walls, and appeared a trophy of some former victory.

Having reached a landing-place, "You may wait here, lady," said he, applying a key to the door of a chamber, "while I go up and tell the Signora you are coming."

"That ceremony is unnecessary," replied Emily, "my aunt will rejoice to see me."

"I am not so sure of that," said Barnar-

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dine, pointing to the room he had opened: "Come in here, lady, while I step up."

Emily, surprised and somewhat shocked, did not dare to oppose him further, but, as he was turning away with the torch, desired he would not leave her in darkness. He looked around, and, observing a tripod lamp, that stood on the stairs, lighted and gave it to Emily, who stepped forward into a large old chamber, and he closed the door. As she listened anxiously to his departing steps, she thought he descended, instead of ascending, the stairs; but the gusts of wind, that whistled round the portal, would not allow her to hear distinctly any other sound. Still, however, she listened, and, perceiving no step in the room above, where he had affirmed Madame Montoni to be, her anxiety increased, though she considered, that the thickness of the floor in this strong building might prevent any sound reaching her from the upper chamber. The next moment, in a pause of the wind, she distin-

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guished Barnardine's step descending to the court, and then thought she heard his voice; but, the rising gust again overcoming other sounds, Emily, to be certain on this point, moved softly to the door, which, on attempting to open it, she discovered was fastened. All the horrid apprehensions, that had lately assailed her, returned at this instant with redoubled force, and no longer appeared like the exaggerations of a timid spirit, but seemed to have been sent to warn her of her fate. She now did not doubt, that Madame Montoni had been murdered, perhaps in this very chamber; or that she herself was brought hither for the same purpose. The countenance, the manners, and the recollected words of Barnardine, when he had spoken of her aunt, confirmed her worst fears. For some moments, she was incapable of considering of any means, by which she might attempt an escape. Still she listened, but heard footsteps neither on the stairs, or in the room above; she

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thought, however, that she again distinguished Barnardine's voice below, and went to a grated window, that opened upon the court, to enquire further. Here she plainly heard his hoarse accents, mingling with the blast, that swept by, but they were lost again so quickly, that their meaning could not be interpreted; and then the light of a torch, which seemed to issue from the portal below, flashed across the court, and the long shadow of a man, who was under the arch-way, appeared upon the pavement. Emily, from the hugeness of this sudden portrait, concluded it to be that of Barnardine; but other deep tones, which past in the wind, soon convinced her he was not alone, and that his companion was not a person very liable to pity.

When her spirits had overcome the first shock of her situation, she held up the lamp to examine, if the chamber afforded a possibility of an escape. It was a spacious room, whose walls, wainscoted with rough

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oak, shewed no casement but the grated one which Emily had left, and no other door than that by which she had entered. The feeble rays of the lamp, however, did not allow her to see at once its full extent; she perceived no furniture, except, indeed, an iron chair, fastened in the centre of the chamber, immediately over which, depending on a chain from the cieling, hung an iron ring. Having gazed upon these, for some time, with wonder and horror, she next observed iron bars below, made for the purpose of confining the feet, and on the arms of the chair were rings of the same metal. As she continued to survey them, she concluded that they were instruments of torture, and it struck her, that some poor wretch had once been fastened in this chair, and had there been starved to death. She was chilled by the thought; but, what was her agony, when, in the next moment, it occurred to her, that her aunt might have been one of these victims, and that she herself might be the next!

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An acute pain seized her head, she was scarcely able to hold the lamp, and, looking round for support, was seating herself, unconsciously, in the iron chair itself; but suddenly perceiving where she was, she started from it in horror, and sprung towards a remote end of the room. Here again she looked round for a seat to sustain her, and perceived only a dark curtain, which, descending from the cieling to the floor, was drawn along the whole side of the chamber. Ill as she was, the appearance of this curtain struck her, and she paused to gaze upon it, in wonder and apprehension.

It seemed to conceal a recess of the chamber; she wished, yet dreaded, to lift it, and to discover what it veiled: twice she was withheld by a recollection of the terrible spectacle her daring hand had formerly unveiled in an apartment of the castle, till, suddenly conjecturing that it concealed the body of her murdered aunt, she seized it, in a fit of desperation, and

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drew it aside. Beyond, appeared a corpse, stretched on a kind of low couch, which was crimsoned with human blood, as was the floor, beneath. The features, deformed by death, were ghastly and horrible, and more than one livid wound appeared in the face. Emily, bending over the body, gazed, for a moment, with an eager, phrensied eye; but, in the next, the lamp dropped from her hand, and she fell senseless at the foot of the couch.

When her senses returned, she found herself surrounded by men, among whom was Barnardine, who were lifting her from the floor, and then bore her along the chamber. She was sensible of what passed, but the extreme languor of her spirits did not permit her to speak, or move, or even to feel any distinct fear. They carried her down the staircase, by which she had ascended; when, having reached the archway, they stopped, and one of the men, taking the torch from Barnardine, opened a small door, that was cut in the great gate,

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and, as he stepped out upon the road, the light he bore shewed several men on horseback, in waiting. Whether it was the freshness of the air, that revived Emily, or that the objects she now saw, roused the spirit of alarm, she suddenly spoke, and made an ineffectual effort to disengage herself from the grasp of the ruffians, who held her.

Barnardine, meanwhile, called loudly for the torch, while distant voices answered, and several persons approached, and, in the same instant, a light flashed upon the court of the castle. Again he vociferated for the torch, and the men hurried Emily through the gate. At a short distance, under the shelter of the castle walls, she perceived the fellow, who had taken the light from the porter, holding it to a man, busily employed in altering the saddle of a horse, round which were several horsemen looking on, whose harsh features received the full glare of the torch; while the broken ground beneath them, the opposite walls,

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with the tufted shrubs, that overhung their summits, and an embattled watch-tower above, were reddened with the gleam, which, fading gradually away, left the remoter ramparts and the woods below to the obscurity of night.

"What do you waste time for, there?" said Barnardine with an oath, as he approached the horsemen. "Dispatch—dispatch!"

"The saddle will be ready in a minute," replied the man who was buckling it, at whom Barnardine now swore again for his negligence, and Emily, calling feebly for help, was hurried towards the horses, while the ruffians disputed on which to place her, the one designed for her not being ready. At this moment a cluster of lights issued from the great gates, and she immediately heard the shrill voice of Annette above those of several other persons, who advanced. In the same moment, she distinguished Montoni and Cavigni, followed by a number of

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ruffian-faced fellows, to whom she no longer looked with terror, but with hope; for at this instant she did not tremble at the thought of any dangers that might await her within the castle, whence so lately, and so anxiously, she had wished to escape. Those which threatened her from without, had engrossed all her apprehensions.

A short contest ensued between the parties, in which that of Montoni, however, were presently victors, and the horsemen, perceiving that numbers were against them, and being, perhaps, not very warmly interested in the affair they had undertaken, galloped off, while Barnardine had run far enough to be lost in the darkness, and Emily was led back into the castle. As she re-passed the courts, the remembrance of what she had seen in the portal-chamber came, with all its horror, to her mind; and when, soon after, she heard the gate close that shut her once more within the castle walls, she shuddered for herself, and, almost forgetting the danger she had es-

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caped, could scarcely think, that any thing less precious than liberty and peace was to be found beyond them.

Montoni ordered Emily to await him in the cedar parlour, whither he soon followed, and then sternly questioned her on this mysterious affair. Though she now viewed him with horror, as the murderer of her aunt, and scarcely knew what she said in reply to his impatient enquiries, her answers, and her manner convinced him, that she had not taken a voluntary part in the late scheme, and he dismissed her upon the appearance of his servants, whom he had ordered to attend, that he might enquire further into the affair, and discover those, who had been accomplices in it.

Emily had been some time in her apartment, before the tumult of her mind allowed her to remember several of the passed circumstances. Then, again, the dead form, which the curtain in the portal-chamber had disclosed, came to her fancy,

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and she uttered a groan, which terrified Annette the more, as Emily forbore to satisfy her curiosity on the subject of it, for she feared to trust her with so fatal a secret, lest her indiscretion should call down the immediate vengeance of Montoni on herself.

Thus compelled to bear within her own mind the whole horror of the secret that oppressed it, her reason seemed to totter under the intolerable weight. She often fixed a wild and vacant look on Annette, and, when she spoke, either did not hear her, or answered from the purpose. Long fits of abstraction succeeded; Annette spoke repeatedly, but her voice seemed not to make any impression on the sense of the long-agitated Emily, who sat fixed and silent, except that, now and then, she heaved a heavy sigh, but without tears.

Terrified at her condition, Annette, at length, left the room, to inform Montoni of it, who had just dismissed his servants, without having made any discoveries on

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the subject of his enquiry. The wild description which this girl now gave of Emily, induced him to follow her immediately to the chamber.

At the sound of his voice, Emily turned her eyes, and a gleam of recollection seemed to shoot athwart her mind, for she immediately rose from her seat, and moved slowly to a remote part of the room. He spoke to her in accents somewhat softened from their usual harshness, but she regarded him with a kind of half curious, half terrified look, and answered only "Yes," to whatever he said. Her mind still seemed to retain no other impression, than that of fear.

Of this disorder Annette could give no explanation, and Montoni, having attempted, for some time, to persuade Emily to talk, retired, after ordering Annette to remain with her during the night, and to inform him, in the morning, of her condition.

When he was gone, Emily again came

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forward, and asked who it was that had been there to disturb her. Annette said it was the Signor—Signor Montoni. Emily repeated the name after her several times, as if she did not recollect it, and then suddenly groaned, and relapsed into abstraction.

With some difficulty, Annette led her to the bed, which Emily examined with an eager, phrensied eye, before she lay down, and then, pointing, turned with shuddering emotion to Annette, who, now more terrified, went towards the door, that she might bring one of the female servants to pass the night with them; but Emily, observing her going, called her by name, and then, in the naturally soft and plaintive tone of her voice, begged, that she, too, would not forsake her.—"For since my father died," added she, sighing, "every body forsakes me."

"Your father, ma'amselle!" said Annette, "he was dead before you knew me."

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"He was, indeed!" rejoined Emily, and her tears began to flow. She now wept silently and long, after which, becoming quite calm, she at length sunk to sleep, Annette having had discretion enough not to interrupt her tears. This girl, as affectionate as she was simple, lost in these moments all her former fears of remaining in the chamber, and watched alone by Emily, during the whole night.

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CHAP. II.

. . . . . "unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions, hold
Th' immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshy nook!"

IL PENSEROSO.

EMILY's mind was refreshed by sleep. On waking in the morning, she looked with surprise on Annette, who sat sleeping in a chair beside the bed, and then endeavoured to recollect herself; but the circumstances of the preceding night were swept from her memory, which seemed to retain no trace of what had passed, and she was still gazing with surprise on Annette, when the latter awoke.

"O dear ma'amselle! do you know me?" cried she.

"Know you! Certainly," replied Emily,

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"you are Annette: but why are you sitting by me thus?"

"O you have been very ill, ma'amselle, —very ill indeed! and I am sure I thought—"

"This is very strange!" said Emily, still trying to recollect the past.—"But I think I do remember, that my fancy has been haunted by frightful dreams. Good God!" she added, suddenly starting, "surely it was nothing more than a dream!"

She fixed a terrified look upon Annette, who, intending to quiet her, said, "Yes, ma'amselle, it was more than a dream, but it is all over now."

"She *is* murdered, then!" said Emily in an inward voice, and shuddering instantaneously. Annette screamed; for, being ignorant of the circumstance to which Emily referred, she attributed her manner to a disordered fancy, but, when she had explained to what her own speech alluded, Emily, recollecting the attempt that had been made to carry her off, asked

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if the contriver of it had been discovered. Annette replied, that he had not, though he might easily be guessed at; and then told Emily she might thank her for her deliverance, who, endeavouring to command the emotion, which the remembrance of her aunt had occasioned, appeared calmly to listen to Annette, though, in truth, she heard scarcely a word that was said.

"And so, ma'amselle," continued the latter, "I was determined to be even with Barnardine for refusing to tell me the secret, by finding it out myself; so I watched you, on the terrace, and, as soon as he had opened the door at the end, I stole out from the castle, to try to follow you; for, says I, I am sure no good can be planned, or why all this secrecy? So, sure enough, he had not bolted the door after him, and, when I opened it, I saw, by the glimmer of the torch, at the other end of the passage, which way you were going. I followed the light, at a distance,

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till you came to the vaults of the chapel, and there I was afraid to go further, for I had heard strange things about these vaults. But then, again, I was afraid to go back, all in darkness, by myself; so by the time Barnardine had trimmed the light, I had resolved to follow you, and I did so, till you came to the great court, and there I was afraid he would see me; so I stopped at the door again, and watched you across to the gates, and, when you was gone up the stairs, I whipt after. There, as I stood under the gate-way, I heard horses' feet without, and several men talking; and I heard them swearing at Barnardine for not bringing you out, and just then he had like to have caught me, for he came down the stairs again, and I had hardly time to get out of his way. But I had heard enough of his secret now, and I determined to be even with him, and to save you, too, ma'amselle, for I guessed it to be some new scheme of Count Morano, though he was gone away. I ran into the castle, but I

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had hard work to find my way through the passage under the chapel; and what is very strange, I quite forgot to look for the ghosts they had told me about, though I would not go into that place again by myself for all the world! Luckily the Signor and Signor Cavigni were up, so we had soon a train at our heels, sufficient to frighten that Barnardine and his rogues, all together."

Annette ceased to speak, but Emily still appeared to listen. At length she said suddenly, "I think I will go to him myself;—where is he?"

Annette asked who was meant.

"Signor Montoni," replied Emily. "I would speak with him;" and Annette, now remembering the order he had given, on the preceding night, respecting her young lady, rose, and said she would seek him herself.

This honest girl's suspicions of Count Morano were perfectly just; Emily, too, when she thought on the scheme, had at-

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tributed it to him; and Montoni, who had not a doubt on this subject also, began to believe that it was by the direction of Morano that poison had formerly been mingled with his wine.

The professions of repentance which Morano had made to Emily, under the anguish of his wound, were sincere at the moment he offered them: but he had mistaken the subject of his sorrow; for while he thought he was condemning the cruelty of his late design, he was lamenting only the state of suffering to which it had reduced him. As these sufferings abated, his former views revived, till, his health being re-established, he again found himself ready for enterprise and difficulty. The porter of the castle, who had served him on a former occasion, willingly accepted a second bribe; and, having concerted the means of drawing Emily to the gates, Morano publicly left the hamlet, whither he had been carried after the affray, and withdrew with his

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people to another at several miles distance. From thence, on a night agreed upon by Barnardine, who had discovered, from the thoughtless prattle of Annette, the most probable means of decoying Emily, the Count sent back his servants to the castle, while he awaited her arrival at the hamlet, with an intention of carrying her immediately to Venice. How this, his second scheme, was frustrated, has already appeared; but the violent and various passions with which this Italian lover was now agitated, on his return to that city, can only be imagined.

Annette having made her report to Montoni of Emily's health and of her request to see him, he replied, that she might attend him in the cedar-room, in about an hour. It was on the subject that pressed so heavily on her mind, that Emily wished to speak to him, yet she did not distinctly know what good purpose this could answer, and sometimes she even recoiled in horror from the expectation of

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his presence. She wished, also, to petition, though she scarcely dared to believe the request would be granted, that he would permit her, since her aunt was no more, to return to her native country.

As the moment of interview approached, her agitation increased so much, that she almost resolved to excuse herself under what could scarcely be called a pretence of illness; and, when she considered what could be said, either concerning herself, or the fate of her aunt, she was equally hopeless as to the event of her entreaty, and terrified as to its effect upon the vengeful spirit of Montoni. Yet, to pretend ignorance of her death, appeared, in some degree, to be sharing its criminality; and, indeed, this event was the only ground on which Emily could rest her petition for leaving Udolpho.

While her thoughts thus wavered, a message was brought, importing, that Montoni could not see her till the next day; and her spirits were then relieved for a

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moment, from an almost intolerable weight of apprehension. Annette said, she fancied the Chevaliers were going out to the wars again, for the court-yard was filled with horses, and she heard, that the rest of the party who went out before were expected at the castle. "And I heard one of the soldiers, too," added she, "say to his comrade, that he would warrant they'd bring home a rare deal of booty.—So thinks I, if the Signor can, with a safe conscience, send his people out a-robbing —why it is no business of mine. I only wish I was once safe out of this castle; and, if it had not been for poor Ludovico's sake, I would have let Count Morano's people run away with us both, for it would have been serving you a good turn, ma'amselle, as well as myself."

Annette might have continued thus talking for hours for any interruption she would have received from Emily, who was silent, inattentive, absorbed in thought, and passed the whole of this day in a kind

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of solemn tranquillity, such as is often the result of faculties overstrained by suffering.

When night returned, Emily recollected the mysterious strains of music, that she had lately heard, in which she still felt some degree of interest, and of which she hoped to hear again the soothing sweetness. The influence of superstition now gained on the weakness of her long-harassed mind; she looked with enthusiastic expectation to the guardian spirit of her father, and, having dismissed Annette for the night, determined to watch alone for their return. It was not yet, however, near the time when she had heard the music on a former night, and anxious to call off her thoughts from distressing subjects, she sat down with one of the few books that she had brought from France; but her mind, refusing controul, became restless and agitated, and she went often to the casement to listen for a sound. Once, she thought she heard a voice, but then, every

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thing without the casement remaining still, she concluded that her fancy had deceived her.

Thus passed the time till twelve o'clock, soon after which the distant sounds, that murmured through the castle, ceased, and sleep seemed to reign over all. Emily then seated herself at the casement, where she was soon recalled from the reverie, into which she sunk, by very unusual sounds, not of music, but like the low mourning of some person in distress. As she listened, her heart faultered in terror, and she became convinced that the former sound was more than imaginary. Still, at intervals, she heard a kind of feeble lamentation, and sought to discover whence it came. There were several rooms underneath, adjoining the rampart, which had been long shut up, and, as the sound probably rose from one of these, she leaned from the casement to observe, whether any light was visible there! The chambers, as far as she could perceive, were quite dark, but, at a little distance, on

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the rampart below, she thought she saw something moving.

The faint twilight, which the stars shed, did not enable her to distinguish what it was; but she judged it to be a sentinel on watch, and she removed her light to a remote part of the chamber, that she might escape notice, during her further observation.

The same object still appeared. Presently, it advanced along the rampart, towards her window, and she then distinguished something like a human form; but the silence with which it moved, convinced her it was no sentinel. As it drew near, she hesitated whether to retire; a thrilling curiosity inclined her to stay, but a dread of she scarcely knew what warned her to withdraw.

While she paused, the figure came opposite to her casement, and was stationary. Every thing remained quiet; she had not heard even a foot fall; and the solemnity of this silence, with the mysterious form she saw, subdued her spirits, so that she was

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moving from the casement, when, on a sudden, she observed the figure start away, and glide down the rampart, after which it was soon lost in the obscurity of night. Emily continued to gaze, for some time, on the way it had passed, and then retired within her chamber, musing on this strange circumstance, and scarcely doubting that she had witnessed a supernatural appearance.

When her spirits recovered composure, she looked round for some other explanation. Remembering what she had heard of the daring enterprises of Montoni, it occurred to her, that she had just seen some unhappy person, who, having been plundered by his banditti, was brought hither a captive; and that the music she had formerly heard, came from him. Yet, if they had plundered him, it still appeared improbable, that they should have brought him to the castle, and it was also more consistent with the manners of banditti to murder those they rob, than to make them

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prisoners. But what, more than any other circumstance, contradicted the supposition that it was a prisoner, was, that it wandered on the terrace without a guard; a consideration, which made her dismiss immediately her first surmise.

Afterwards, she was inclined to believe that Count Morano had obtained admittance into the castle; but she soon recollected the difficulties and dangers that must have opposed such an enterprise, and that, if he had so far succeeded, to come alone and in silence to her casement at midnight, was not the conduct he would have adopted, particularly since the private staircase, communicating with her apartment, was known to him; neither would he have uttered the dismal sounds she had heard.

Another suggestion represented, that this might be some person, who had designs upon the castle; but the mournful sounds destroyed, also, that probability. Thus, enquiry only perplexed her. Who, or what, it could be that haunted this lonely hour;

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complaining in such doleful accents and in such sweet music (for she was still inclined to believe, that the former strains and the late appearance were connected), she had no means of ascertaining; and imagination again assumed her empire, and roused the mysteries of superstition.

She determined, however, to watch on the following night, when her doubts might, perhaps, be cleared up; and she almost resolved to address the figure, if it should appear again.

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CHAP. III.

"Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft' seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres,
Ling'ring, and sitting, by a new-made grave."

MILTON.

ON the following day, Montoni sent a second excuse to Emily, who was surprised at the circumstance. "This is very strange!" said she to herself. "His conscience tells him the purport of my visit, and he defers it, to avoid an explanation." She now almost resolved to throw herself in his way, but terror checked the intention, and this day passed, as the preceding one, with Emily, except that a degree of awful expectation, concerning the approaching night, now somewhat disturbed the dreadful calmness that had pervaded her mind.

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Towards evening, the second part of the band, which had made the first excursion among the mountains, returned to the castle, where, as they entered the courts, Emily, in her remote chamber, heard their loud shouts and strains of exultation, like the orgies of furies over some horrid sacrifice. She even feared they were about to commit some barbarous deed; a conjecture from which, however, Annette soon relieved her, by telling, that the people were only exulting over the plunder they had brought with them. This circumstance still further confirmed her in the belief, that Montoni had really commenced to be a captain of banditti, and meant to retrieve his broken fortunes by the plunder of travellers! Indeed, when she considered all the circumstances of his situation—in an armed, and almost inaccessible castle, retired far among the recesses of wild and solitary mountains, along whose distant skirts were scattered towns, and cities, whither wealthy travellers were continually

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passing—this appeared to be the situation of all others most suited for the success of schemes of rapine, and she yielded to the strange thought, that Montoni was become a captain of robbers. His character also, unprincipled, dauntless, cruel, and enterprising, seemed to fit him for the situation. Delighting in the tumult and in the struggles of life, he was equally a stranger to pity and to fear; his very courage was a sort of animal ferocity; not the noble impulse of a principle, such as inspirits the mind against the oppressor, in the cause of the oppressed; but a constitutional hardiness of nerve that cannot feel, and that, therefore, cannot fear.

Emily's supposition, however natural, was in part erroneous, for she was a stranger to the state of this country, and to the circumstances under which its frequent wars were partly conducted. The revenues of the many states of Italy being, at that time, insufficient to the support of standing armies, even during the short

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periods, which the turbulent habits both of the governments and the people permitted to pass in peace, an order of men arose not known in our age, and but faintly described in the history of their own. Of the soldiers disbanded at the end of every war, few returned to the safe, but unprofitable occupations, then usual in peace. Sometimes they passed into other countries, and mingled with armies, which still kept the field. Sometimes they formed themselves into bands of robbers, and occupied remote fortresses, where their desperate character, the weakness of the governments which they offended, and the certainty, that they could be recalled to the armies, when their presence should be again wanted, prevented them from being much pursued by the civil power; and, sometimes, they attached themselves to the fortunes of a popular chief, by whom they were led into the service of any state, which could settle with him the price of their valour. From this latter practice arose their

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name—*Condottieri*; a term formidable all over Italy, for a period, which concluded in the earlier part of the seventeenth century, but of which it is not so easy to ascertain the commencement.

Contests between the smaller states were then, for the most part, affairs of enterprise alone, and the probabilities of success were estimated, not from the skill, but from the personal courage of the general, and the soldiers. The ability, which was necessary to the conduct of tedious operations, was little valued. It was enough to know how a party might be led towards their enemies, with the greatest secrecy, or conducted from them in the compactest order. The officer was to precipitate himself into a situation, where, but for his example, the soldiers might not have ventured; and as the opposed parties knew little of each other's strength, the event of the day was frequently determined by the boldness of the first movements. In such services the

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Condottieri were eminent, and in these, where plunder always followed success, their characters acquired a mixture of intrepidity and profligacy, which awed even those whom they served.

When they were not thus engaged, their chief had usually his own fortress, in which, or in its neighbourhood, they enjoyed an irksome rest; and, though their wants were, at one time, partly supplied from the property of the inhabitants, the lavish distribution of their plunder at others, prevented them from being obnoxious; and the peasants of such districts gradually shared the character of their warlike visitors. The neighbouring governments sometimes professed, but seldom endeavoured, to suppress these military communities; both because it was difficult to do so, and because a disguised protection of them ensured, for the service of their wars, a body of men, who could not otherwise be so cheaply maintained, or so perfectly qualified. The

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commanders sometimes even relied so far upon this policy of the several powers, as to frequent their capitals; and Montoni, having met them in the gaming parties of Venice and Padua, conceived a desire to emulate their characters, before his ruined fortunes tempted him to adopt their practices. It was for the arrangement of his present plan of life, that the midnight councils were held at his mansion in Venice, and at which Orsino and some other members of the present community then assisted with suggestions, which they had since executed with the wreck of their fortunes.

On the return of night, Emily resumed her station at the casement. There was now a moon; and, as it rose over the tufted woods, its yellow light served to shew the lonely terrace and the surrounding objects more distinctly than the twilight of the stars had done, and promised Emily to assist her observations, should the mysterious form return. On this sub-

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ject, she again wavered in conjecture, and hesitated whether to speak to the figure, to which a strong and almost irresistible interest urged her; but terror, at intervals, made her reluctant to do so.

"If this is a person who has designs upon the castle," said she, "my curiosity may prove fatal to me; yet the mysterious music, and the lamentations I heard, must surely have proceeded from him: if so, he cannot be an enemy."

She then thought of her unfortunate aunt, and, shuddering with grief and horror, the suggestions of imagination seized her mind with all the force of truth, and she believed, that the form she had seen was supernatural. She trembled, breathed with difficulty, an icy coldness touched her cheeks, and her fears for a while overcame her judgement. Her resolution now forsook her, and she determined, if the figure should appear, not to speak to it.

Thus the time passed, as she sat at her casement, awed by expectation, and by

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the gloom and stillness of midnight; for she saw obscurely in the moonlight only the mountains and woods, a cluster of towers, that formed the west angle of the castle, and the terrace below; and heard no sound, except now and then the lonely watch-word, passed by the sentinels on duty, and afterwards the steps of the men who came to relieve guard, and whom she knew at a distance on the rampart by their pikes, that glittered in the moon-beam, and then, by the few short words, in which they hailed their fellows of the night. Emily retired within her chamber, while they passed the casement. When she returned to it, all was again quiet. It was now very late, she was wearied with watching, and began to doubt the reality of what she had seen on the preceding night; but she still lingered at the window, for her mind was too perturbed to admit of sleep. The moon shone with a clear lustre, that afforded her a complete view of the terrace; but she saw only a solitary sentinel, pacing at

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one end of it; and, at length, tired with expectation, she withdrew to seek rest.

Such, however, was the impression, left on her mind, by the music, and the complaining she had formerly heard, as well as by the figure, which she fancied she had seen, that she determined to repeat the watch, on the following night.

Montoni, on the next day, took no notice of Emily's appointed visit, but she, more anxious than before to see him, sent Annette to enquire at what hour he would admit her. He mentioned eleven o'clock, and Emily was punctual to the moment; at which she called up all her fortitude to support the shock of his presence and the dreadful recollections it enforced. He was with several of his officers, in the cedar-room; on observing whom she paused, and her agitation increased, while he continued to converse with them, apparently not observing her, till some of his officers, turning round, saw Emily, and uttered an exclamation. She was hastily retiring

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when Montoni's voice arrested her, and, in a faltering accent, she said,—"I would speak with you, Signor Montoni, if you are at leisure."

"These are my friends," he replied; "whatever you would say, they may "hear."

Emily, without replying, turned from the rude gaze of the chevaliers, and Montoni then followed her to the hall, whence he led her to a small room, of which he shut the door with violence. As she looked on his dark countenance, she again thought she saw the murderer of her aunt; and her mind was so convulsed with horror, that she had not power to recal thought enough to explain the purport of her visit; and to trust herself with the mention of Madame Montoni was more than she dared.

Montoni at length impatiently enquired what she had to say. "I have no time for trifling," he added, "my moments are important."

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Emily then told him, that she wished to return to France, and came to beg, that he would permit her to do so.—But when he looked surprised, and enquired for the motive of the request, she hesitated, became paler than before, trembled, and had nearly sunk at his feet. He observed her emotion with apparent indifference, and interrupted the silence, by telling her he must be gone. Emily, however, recalled her spirits sufficiently to enable her to repeat her request. And, when Montoni absolutely refused it, her slumbering mind was roused.

"I can no longer remain here with propriety, sir," said she, "and I may be allowed to ask, by what right you detain me."

"It is my will that you remain here," said Montoni, laying his hand on the door to go; "let that suffice you."

Emily, considering that she had no appeal from this will, forbore to dispute his right, and made a feeble effort to persuade

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him to be just. "While my aunt lived, sir," said she, in a tremulous voice, "my residence here was not improper; but now, that she is no more, I may surely be permitted to depart. My stay cannot benefit you, sir, and will only distress me."

"Who told you that Madame Montoni was dead?" said Montoni, with an inquisitive eye. Emily hesitated, for nobody had told her so, and she did not dare to avow the having seen that spectacle in the portal-chamber, which had compelled her to the belief.

"Who told you so?" he repeated, more sternly.

"Alas! I know it too well," replied Emily: "spare me on this terrible subject!"

She sat down on a bench to support herself.

"If you wish to see her," said Montoni, "you may; she lies in the east turret."

He now left the room, without awaiting her reply, and returned to the cedar-cham-

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ber, where such of the chevaliers as had not before seen Emily, began to rally him on the discovery they had made; but Montoni did not appear disposed to bear this mirth, and they changed the subject.

Having talked with the subtle Orsino, on the plan of an excursion, which he meditated for a future day, his friend advised that they should lie in wait for the enemy, which Verezzi impetuously opposed, reproached Orsino with want of spirit, and swore, that, if Montoni would let him lead on fifty men, he would conquer all that should oppose him.

Orsino smiled contemptuously; Montoni smiled too, but he also listened. Verezzi then proceeded with vehement declamation and assertion, till he was stopped by an argument of Orsino, which he knew not how to answer better than by invective. His fierce spirit detested the cunning caution of Orsino, whom he constantly opposed, and whose inveterate, though silent, hatred he had long ago incurred. And

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Montoni was a calm observer of both, whose different qualifications he knew, and how to bend their opposite character to the perfection of his own designs. But Verezzi, in the heat of opposition, now did not scruple to accuse Orsino of cowardice, at which the countenance of the latter, while he made no reply, was overspread with a livid paleness; and Montoni, who watched his lurking eye, saw him put his hand hastily into his bosom. But Verezzi, whose face, glowing with crimson, formed a striking contrast to the complexion of Orsino, remarked not the action, and continued boldly declaiming against cowards to Cavigni, who was slily laughing at his vehemence, and at the silent mortification of Orsino, when the latter, retiring a few steps behind, drew forth a stiletto to stab his adversary in the back. Montoni arrested his half-extended arm, and, with a significant look, made him return the poniard into his bosom, unseen by all except himself; for most of

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the party were disputing at a distant window, on the situation of a dell where they meant to form an ambuscade.

When Verezzi had turned round, the deadly hatred, expressed on the features of his opponent, raising, for the first time, a suspicion of his intention, he laid his hand on his sword, and then, seeming to recollect himself, strode up to Montoni.

"Signor," said he, with a significant look at Orsino, "we are not a band of assassins; if you have business for brave men, employ me on this expedition: you shall have the last drop of my blood: if you have only work for cowards—keep him," pointing to Orsino, "and let me quit Udolpho."

Orsino, still more incensed, again drew forth his stiletto, and rushed towards Verezzi, who, at the same instant, advanced with his sword, when Montoni and the rest of the party interfered and separated them.

"This is the conduct of a boy," said

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Montoni to Verezzi, "not of a man: be more moderate in your speech."

"Moderation is the virtue of cowards," retorted Verezzi; "they are moderate in every thing—but in fear."

"I accept your words" said, Montoni, turning upon him with a fierce and haughty look, and drawing his sword out of the scabbard.

"With all my heart," cried Verezzi, "though I did not mean them for you."

He directed a pass at Montoni; and, while they fought, the villain Orsino made another attempt to stab Verezzi, and was again prevented.

The combatants were, at length, separated; and, after a very long and violent dispute, reconciled. Montoni then left the room with Orsino, whom he detained in private consultation for a considerable time.

Emily, meanwhile, stunned by the last words of Montoni, forgot, for the moment, his declaration, that she should continue in

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the castle, while she thought of her unfortunate aunt, who, he had said, was laid in the east turret. In suffering the remains of his wife to lie thus long unburied, there appeared a degree of brutality more shocking than she had suspected even Montoni could practise.

After a long struggle, she determined to accept his permission to visit the turret, and to take a last look of her ill-fated aunt: with which design she returned to her chamber, and, while she waited for Annette to accompany her, endeavoured to acquire fortitude sufficient to support her through the approaching scene; for, though she trembled to encounter it, she knew that to remember the performance of this last act of duty would hereafter afford her consoling satisfaction.

Annette came, and Emily mentioned her purpose, from which the former endeavoured to dissuade her, though without effect, and Annette was, with much difficulty, prevailed upon to accompany her

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to the turret; but no consideration could make her promise to enter the chamber of death.

They now left the corridor, and, having reached the foot of the staircase, which Emily had formerly ascended, Annette declared she would go no further, and Emily proceeded alone. When she saw the track of blood, which she had before observed, her spirits fainted, and, being compelled to rest on the stairs, she almost determined to proceed no further. The pause of a few moments restored her resolution, and she went on.

As she drew near the landing-place, upon which the upper chamber opened, she remembered, that the door was formerly fastened, and apprehended, that it might still be so. In this expectation, however, she was mistaken; for the door opened at once into a dusky and silent chamber, round which she fearfully looked, and then slowly advanced, when a hollow voice spoke. Emily, who was unable to speak, or to

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move from the spot, uttered no sound of terror. The voice spoke again; and then, thinking that it resembled that of Madame Montoni, Emily's spirits were instantly roused; she rushed towards a bed, that stood in a remote part of the room, and drew aside the curtains. Within, appeared a pale and emaciated face. She started back, then again advanced, shuddered as she took up the skeleton hand that lay stretched upon the quilt; then let it drop, and then viewed the face with a long, unsettled gaze. It was that of Madame Montoni, though so changed by illness, that the resemblance of what it had been could scarcely be traced in what it now appeared. She was still alive, and, raising her heavy eyes, she turned them on her niece.

"Where have you been so long?" said she, in the same hollow tone, "I thought you had forsaken me."

"Do you indeed live," said Emily, at length, "or is this but a terrible apparition?" She received no answer, and again

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she snatched up the hand. "This is substance," she exclaimed, "but it is cold—cold as marble!" She let it fall. "O, if you really live, speak!" said Emily, in a voice of desperation, "that I may not lose my senses—say you know me!"

"I do live," replied Madame Montoni, "but—I feel that I am about to die."

Emily clasped the hand she held, more eagerly, and groaned. They were both silent for some moments. Then Emily endeavoured to soothe her, and enquired what had reduced her to this present deplorable state.

Montoni, when he removed her to the turret under the improbable suspicion of having attempted his life, had ordered the men employed on the occasion to observe a strict secrecy concerning her. To this he was influenced by a double motive. He meant to debar her from the comfort of Emily's visits, and to secure an opportunity of privately dispatching her, should any new circumstances occur to confirm the

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present suggestions of his suspecting mind. His consciousness of the hatred he deserved, it was natural enough should at first lead him to attribute to her the attempt that had been made upon his life; and, though there was no other reason to believe that she was concerned in that atrocious design, his suspicions remained; he continued to confine her in the turret, under a strict guard; and, without pity or remorse, had suffered her to lie, forlorn and neglected, under a raging fever, till it had reduced her to the present state.

The track of blood, which Emily had seen on the stairs, had flowed from the unbound wound of one of the men employed to carry Madame Montoni, and which he had received in the late affray. At night these men, having contented themselves with securing the door of their prisoner's room, had retired from guard; and then it was, that Emily, at the time of her first enquiry, had found the turret so silent and deserted.

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When she had attempted to open the door of the chamber, her aunt was sleeping, and this occasioned the silence, which had contributed to delude her into a belief, that she was no more; yet had her terror permitted her to persevere longer in the call, she would probably have awakened Madame Montoni, and have been spared much suffering. The spectacle in the portal-chamber, which afterwards confirmed Emily's horrible suspicion, was the corpse of a man, who had fallen in the affray, and the same which had been borne into the servants' hall, where she took refuge from the tumult. This man had lingered under his wounds for some days; and, soon after his death, his body had been removed, on the couch on which he died, for interment in the vault beneath the chapel, through which Emily and Barnardine had passed to the chamber.

Emily, after asking Madame Montoni a thousand questions concerning herself, left her, and sought Montoni; for the more

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solemn interest she felt for her aunt, made her now regardless of the resentment her remonstrances might draw upon herself, and of the improbability of his granting what she meant to entreat.

"Madame Montoni is now dying, sir," said Emily, as soon as she saw him—"Your resentment, surely, will not pursue her to the last moment! Suffer her to be removed from that forlorn room to her own apartment, and to have necessary comforts administered."

"Of what service will that be, if she is dying?" said Montoni, with apparent indifference.

"The service, at least, of saving you, sir, from a few of those pangs of conscience you must suffer, when you shall be in the same situation," said Emily, with imprudent indignation, of which Montoni soon made her sensible, by commanding her to quit his presence. Then, forgetting her resentment, and impressed only by compassion for the piteous state of her aunt, dying without

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succour, she submitted to humble herself to Montoni, and to adopt every persuasive means that might reduce him to relent towards his wife.

For a considerable time he was proof against all she said, and all she looked; but at length the divinity of pity, beaming in Emily's eyes, seemed to touch his heart. He turned away, ashamed of his better feelings, half sullen, and half relenting; but finally consented, that his wife should be removed to her own apartment, and that Emily should attend her. Dreading equally, that this relief might arrive too late, and that Montoni might retract his concession, Emily scarcely staid to thank him for it, but, assisted by Annette, she quickly prepared Madame Montoni's bed, and they carried her a cordial, that might enable her feeble frame to sustain the fatigue of a removal.

Madame was scarcely arrived in her own apartment, when an order was given by her husband, that she should remain in the

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turret; but Emily, thankful that she had made such dispatch, hastened to inform him of it, as well as that a second removal would instantly prove fatal, and he suffered his wife to continue where she was.

During this day, Emily never left Madame Montoni, except to prepare such little nourishing things as she judged necessary to sustain her, and which Madame Montoni received with quiet acquiescence, though she seemed sensible that they could not save her from approaching dissolution, and scarcely appeared to wish for life. Emily meanwhile watched over her with the most tender solicitude, no longer seeing her imperious aunt in the poor object before her, but the sister of her late beloved father, in a situation that called for all her compassion and kindness. When night came, she determined to sit up with her aunt, but this the latter positively forbade, commanding her to retire to rest, and Annette alone to remain in her chamber.

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Rest was, indeed, necessary to Emily, whose spirits and frame were equally wearied by the occurrences and exertions of the day; but she would not leave Madame Montoni till after the turn of midnight, a period then thought so critical by the physicians.

Soon after twelve, having enjoined Annette to be wakeful, and to call her, should any change appear for the worse, Emily sorrowfully bade Madame Montoni good-night, and withdrew to her chamber. Her spirits were more than usually depressed by the piteous condition of her aunt, whose recovery she scarcely dared to expect. To her own misfortunes she saw no period, inclosed as she was, in a remote castle, beyond the reach of any friends, had she possessed such, and beyond the pity even of strangers; while she knew herself to be in the power of a man capable of any action, which his interest, or his ambition, might suggest.

Occupied by melancholy reflections and

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by anticipations as sad, she did not retire immediately to rest, but leaned thoughtfully on her open casement. The scene before her of woods and mountains, reposing in the moon-light, formed a regretted contrast with the state of her mind; but the lonely murmur of these woods, and the view of this sleeping landscape, gradually soothed her emotions and softened her to tears.

She continued to weep, for some time, lost to every thing, but to a gentle sense of her misfortunes. When she, at length, took the handkerchief from her eyes, she perceived, before her, on the terrace below, the figure she had formerly observed, which stood fixed and silent, immediately opposite to her casement. On perceiving it, she started back, and terror for some time overcame curiosity;—at length, she returned to the casement, and still the figure was before it, which she now compelled herself to observe, but was utterly unable to speak, as she had formerly intended. The moon shone with a clear

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light, and it was, perhaps, the agitation of her mind, that prevented her distinguishing, with any degree of accuracy, the form before her. It was still stationary, and she began to doubt, whether it was really animated.

Her scattered thoughts were now so far returned, as to remind her that her light exposed her to dangerous observation, and she was stepping back to remove it, when she perceived the figure move, and then wave what seemed to be its arm, as if to beckon her; and, while she gazed, fixed in fear, it repeated the action. She now attempted to speak, but the words died on her lips, and she went from the casement to remove her light; as she was doing which, she heard, from without, a faint groan. Listening, but not daring to return, she presently heard it repeated.

"Good God!—what can this mean!" said she.

Again she listened, but the sound came no more; and, after a long interval of silence, she recovered courage enough to

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go to the casement, when she again saw the same appearance! It beckoned again, and again uttered a low sound.

"That groan was surely human!" said she. "I *will* speak.—Who is it," cried Emily in a faint voice, "that wanders at this late hour?"

The figure raised its head, but suddenly started away, and glided down the terrace. She watched it, for a long while, passing swiftly in the moon-light, but heard no footstep, till a sentinel from the other extremity of the rampart walked slowly along. The man stopped under her window, and, looking up, called her by name. She was retiring precipitately, but, a second summons inducing her to reply, the soldier then respectfully asked if she had seen any thing pass. On her answering, that she had, he said no more; but walked away down the terrace, Emily following him with her eyes, till he was lost in the distance. But, as he was on guard, she knew he could not go beyond the ram-

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part, and, therefore, resolved to await his return.

Soon after, his voice was heard, at a distance, calling loudly; and then a voice still more distant answered, and, in the next moment, the watch-word was given, and passed along the terrace. As the soldiers moved hastily under the casement, she called to enquire what had happened, but they passed without regarding her.

Emily's thoughts returning to the figure she had seen, "It cannot be a person, who has designs upon the castle," said she; "such an one would conduct himself very differently. He would not venture where sentinels were on watch, nor fix himself opposite to a window, where he perceived he must be observed; much less would he beckon, or utter a sound of complaint. Yet it cannot be a prisoner, for how could he obtain the opportunity to wander thus?"

If she had been subject to vanity, she might have supposed this figure to be some inhabitant of the castle, who wandered

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under the casement in the hope of seeing her, and of being allowed to declare his admiration; but this opinion never occurred to Emily, and, if it had, she would have dismissed it as improbable, on considering, that, when the opportunity of speaking had occurred, it had been suffered to pass in silence; and that, even at the moment in which she had spoken, the form had abruptly quitted the place.

While she mused, two sentinels walked up the rampart in earnest conversation, of which she caught a few words, and learned from these, that one of their comrades had fallen down senseless. Soon after, three other soldiers appeared slowly advancing from the bottom of the terrace, but she heard only a low voice, that came at intervals. As they drew near, she perceived this to be the voice of him who walked in the middle, apparently supported by his comrades; and she again called to them, enquiring what had happened. At the sound of her voice, they stopped, and

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looked up, while she repeated her question, and was told, that Roberto, their fellow of the watch, had been seized with a fit, and that his cry, as he fell, had caused a false alarm.

"Is he subject to fits?" said Emily.

"Yes, Signora," replied Roberto; "but if I had not, what I saw was enough to have frightened the Pope himself."

"What was it?" enquired Emily, trembling.

"I cannot tell what it was, lady, or what I saw, or how it vanished," replied the soldier, who seemed to shudder at the recollection.

"Was it the person, whom you followed down the rampart, that has occasioned you this alarm?" said Emily, endeavouring to conceal her own.

"Person!" exclaimed the man,—"it was the devil, and this is not the first time I have seen him!"

"Nor will it be the last," observed one of his comrades, laughing.

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"No, no, I warrant not," said another.

"Well," rejoined Roberto, "you may be as merry now, as you please; you was none so jocose the other night, Sebastian, when you was on watch with Launcelot."

"Launcelot need not talk of that," replied Sebastian, "let him remember how he stood trembling, and unable to give the *word*, till the man was gone. If the man had not come so silently upon us, I would have seized him, and soon made him tell who he was."

"What man?" enquired Emily.

"It was no man, lady," said Launcelot, who stood by, "but the devil himself, as my comrade says. What man, who does not live in the castle, could get within the walls at midnight? Why I might just as well pretend to march to Venice, and get among all the senators, when they are counselling; and I warrant I should have more chance of getting out again alive, than any fellow that we should catch within the gates after dark. So I think I have

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proved plainly enough, that this can be nobody that lives out of the castle; and now I will prove, that it can be nobody that lives in the castle—for, if he did—why should he be afraid to be seen? So after this, I hope nobody will pretend to tell me it was any body. No, I say again, by holy Pope! it was the devil, and Sebastian, there, knows this is not the first time we have seen him."

"When did you see the figure, then, before?" said Emily, half smiling, who, though she thought the conversation somewhat too much, felt an interest, which would not permit her to conclude it.

"About a week ago, lady," said Sebastian, taking up the story.

"And where?"

"On the rampart, lady, higher up."

"Did you pursue it, that it fled?"

"No, Signora. Launcelot and I were on watch together, and every thing was so still you might have heard a mouse stir, when, suddenly, Launcelot says—Sebas-

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tian! do you see nothing? I turned my head a little to the left, as it might be—thus. No, says I. Hush! said Launcelot,—look yonder—just by the last cannon on the rampart! I looked, and then thought I did see something move; but there being no light, but what the stars gave, I could not be certain. We stood quite silent, to watch it, and presently saw something pass along the castle-wall, just opposite to us!"

"Why did not you seize it, then?" cried a soldier, who had scarcely spoken till now.

"Aye, why did you not seize it?" said Roberto.

"You should have been there to have done that," replied Sebastian. "You would have been bold enough to have taken it by the throat, though it had been the devil himself; we could not take such a liberty, perhaps, because we are not so well acquainted with him, as you are. But, as I was saying, it stole by us so

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quickly, that we had not time to get rid of our surprise, before it was gone. Then, we knew it was in vain to follow. We kept constant watch all that night, but we saw it no more. Next morning, we told some of our comrades, who were on duty on other parts of the ramparts, what we had seen; but they had seen nothing, and laughed at us, and it was not till to-night that the same figure walked again."

"Where did you lose it, friend?" said Emily to Roberto.

"When I left you, lady," replied the man, "you might see me go down the rampart, but it was not till I reached the east terrace, that I saw any thing. Then, the moon shining bright, I saw something like a shadow flitting before me, as it were, at some distance. I stopped, when I turned the corner of the east tower, where I had seen this figure not a moment before,—but it was gone! As I stood, looking through the old arch which leads to the east rampart, and where I am sure

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it had passed, I heard, all of a sudden, such a sound!—It was not like a groan, or a cry, or a shout, or any thing I ever heard in my life. I heard it only once, and that was enough for me; for I know nothing that happened after, till I found my comrades, here, about me."

"Come," said Sebastian, "let us go to our posts—the moon is setting. Good-night, lady!"

"Aye, let us go," rejoined Roberto. "Good-night, lady!"

"Good-night; the holy mother guard you!" said Emily, as she closed her casement and retired to reflect upon the strange circumstance that had just occurred, connecting which with what had happened on former nights, she endeavoured to derive from the whole something more positive than conjecture. But her imagination was inflamed, while her judgement was not enlightened, and the terrors of superstition again pervaded her mind.

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CHAP. IV.

. . . . . "There is one within,
Beside the things that we have heard and seen,
Recounts most horrid sights, seen by the watch."

JULIUS CÆSAR.

IN the morning, Emily found Madame Montoni nearly in the same condition, as on the preceding night; she had slept little, and that little had not refreshed her; she smiled on her niece, and seemed cheered by her presence, but spoke only a few words, and never named Montoni, who, however, soon after entered the room. His wife, when she understood that he was there, appeared much agitated, but was entirely silent, till Emily rose from a chair at the bed-side, when she begged, in a feeble voice, that she would not leave her.

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The visit of Montoni was not to soothe his wife, whom he knew to be dying, or to console, or to ask her forgiveness, but to make a last effort to procure that signature, which would transfer her estates in Languedoc, after her death, to him rather than to Emily. This was a scene, that exhibited on his part his usual inhumanity, and, on that of Madame Montoni, a persevering spirit, contending with a feeble frame; while Emily repeatedly declared to him her willingness to resign all claim to those estates, rather than that the last hours of her aunt should be disturbed by contention. Montoni, however, did not leave the room, till his wife, exhausted by the obstinate dispute, had fainted, and she lay so long insensible, that Emily began to fear that the spark of life was extinguished. At length, she revived, and, looking feebly up at her niece, whose tears were falling over her, made an effort to speak, but her words were unintelligible, and Emily again apprehended she was dy-

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ing. Afterwards, however, she recovered her speech, and, being somewhat restored by a cordial, conversed for a considerable time on the subject of her estates in France, with clearness and precision. She directed her niece where to find some papers relative to them, which she had hitherto concealed from the search of Montoni, and earnestly charged her never to suffer these papers to escape her.

Soon after this conversation, Madame Montoni sunk into a doze, and continued slumbering till evening, when she seemed better than she had been since her removal from the turret. Emily never left her, for a moment, till long after midnight, and even then would not have quitted the room, had not her aunt entreated that she would retire to rest. She then obeyed the more willingly, because her patient appeared somewhat recruited by sleep; and, giving Annette the same injunction, as on the preceding night, she withdrew to her own apartment. But her spirits were wakeful

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and agitated, and, finding it impossible to sleep, she determined to watch once more for the mysterious appearance that had so much interested and alarmed her.

It was now the second watch of the night, and about the time when the figure had before appeared. Emily heard the passing steps of the sentinels on the rampart, as they changed guard; and, when all was again silent, she took her station at the casement, leaving her lamp in a remote part of the chamber, that she might escape notice from without. The moon gave a faint and uncertain light, for heavy vapours surrounded it, and, often rolling over the disk, left the scene below in total darkness. It was in one of these moments of obscurity, that she observed a small and lambent flame, moving at some distance on the terrace. While she gazed, it disappeared, and, the moon again emerging from the lurid and heavy thunder clouds, she turned her attention to the heavens, where the vivid lightnings darted from

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cloud to cloud, and flashed silently on the woods below. She loved to catch, in the momentary gleam, the gloomy landscape. Sometimes a cloud opened its light upon a distant mountain, and, while the sudden splendor illumined all its recesses of rock and wood, the rest of the scene remained in deep shadow; at others, partial features of the castle were revealed by the glimpse —the ancient arch leading to the east rampart, the turret above, or the fortifications beyond; and then, perhaps, the whole edifice, with all its towers, its dark massy walls and pointed casements, would appear, and vanish in an instant.

Emily, looking again upon the rampart, perceived the flame she had seen before; it moved onward; and, soon after, she thought she heard a footstep. The light appeared and disappeared frequently, while, as she watched, it glided under her casements, and, at the same instant, she was certain that a footstep passed, but the darkness did not permit her to distinguish

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any object except the flame. It moved away, and then, by a gleam of lightning, she perceived some person on the terrace. All the anxieties of the preceding night returned. This person advanced, and the playing flame alternately appeared and vanished. Emily wished to speak, to end her doubts, whether this figure were human or supernatural; but her courage failed as often as she attempted utterance, till the light moved again under the casement, and she faintly demanded, who passed.

"A friend," replied a voice.

"What friend," said Emily, somewhat encouraged, "who are you, and what is that light you carry?"

"I am Anthonio, one of the Signor's soldiers," replied the voice.

"And what is that tapering light you bear?" said Emily, see how it darts upwards,—and now it vanishes!"

"This light, lady," said the soldier, "has appeared to-night as you see it, on the point of my lance, ever since I have

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been on watch; but what it means I cannot tell."

"This is very strange!" said Emily.

"My fellow-guard," continued the man, "has the same flame on his arms; he says he has sometimes seen it before. I never did; I am but lately come to the castle, for I have not been long a soldier."

"How does your comrade account for it?" said Emily.

"He says it is an omen, lady, and bodes no good."

"And what harm can it bode?" rejoined Emily.

"He knows not so much as that, lady."

Whether Emily was alarmed by this omen, or not, she certainly was relieved from much terror by discovering this man to be only a soldier on duty, and it immediately occurred to her, that it might be he who had occasioned so much alarm on the preceding night. There were, however, some circumstances that still required explanation. As far as she could judge

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by the faint moon-light, that had assisted her observation, the figure she had seen did not resemble this man either in shape or size; besides, she was certain it had carried no arms. The silence of its steps, if steps it had, the moaning sounds, too, which it had uttered, and its strange disappearance, were circumstances of mysterious import, that did not apply, with probability, to a soldier engaged in the duty of his guard.

She now enquired of the sentinel, whether he had seen any person besides his fellow-watch, walking on the terrace, about midnight; and then briefly related what she had herself observed.

"I was not on guard that night, lady," replied the man, "but I heard of what happened. There are amongst us who believe strange things. Strange stories, too, have long been told of this castle, but it is no business of mine to repeat them; and, for my part, I have no reason to complain; our chief does nobly by us."

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"I commend your prudence," said Emily. "Good-night, and accept this from me," she added, throwing him a small piece of coin, and then closing the casement to put an end to the discourse.

When he was gone, she opened it again, listened with a gloomy pleasure to the distant thunder that began to murmur among the mountains, and watched the arrowy lightnings, which broke over the remoter scene. The pealing thunder rolled onward, and then, reverbed by the mountains, other thunder seemed to answer from the opposite horizon; while the accumulating clouds, entirely concealing the moon, assumed a red sulphureous tinge, that foretold a violent storm.

Emily remained at her casement, till the vivid lightning, that now, every instant, revealed the wide horizon and the landscape below, made it no longer safe to do so, and she went to her couch; but, unable to compose her mind to sleep, still listened in silent awe to the tremendous sounds,

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that seemed to shake the castle to its foundation.

She had continued thus for a considerable time, when amidst the uproar of the storm she thought she heard a voice, and, raising herself to listen, saw the chamber door open, and Annette enter with a countenance of wild affright.

"She is dying, ma'amselle; my lady is dying!" said she.

Emily started up, and ran to Madame Montoni's room. When she entered, her aunt appeared to have fainted, for she was quite still, and insensible; and Emily, with a strength of mind, that refused to yield to grief while any duty required her activity, applied every means that seemed likely to restore her. But the last struggle was over --- she was gone for ever.

When Emily perceived that all her efforts were ineffectual, she interrogated the terrified Annette, and learned, that Madame Montoni had fallen into a doze, soon after Emily's departure, in which she had

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continued, until a few minutes before her death.

"I wondered, ma'amselle," said Annette, "what was the reason my lady did not seem frightened at the thunder, when I was so terrified, and I went often to the bed to speak to her, but she appeared to be asleep; till presently I heard a strange noise, and, on going to her, saw she was dying."

Emily, at this recital, shed tears. She had no doubt but that the violent change in the air, which the tempest produced, had effected this fatal one on the exhausted frame of Madame Montoni.

After some deliberation, she determined that Montoni should not be informed of this event till the morning, for she considered that he might, perhaps, utter some inhuman expressions, such as in the present temper of her spirits she could not bear. With Annette alone, therefore, whom she encouraged by her own example, she performed some of the last so-

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lemn offices for the dead, and compelled herself to watch during the night by the body of her deceased aunt. During this solemn period, rendered more awful by the tremendous storm that shook the air, she frequently addressed herself to Heaven for support and protection, and her pious prayers, we may believe, were accepted of the God that giveth comfort.

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CHAP. V.

"The midnight clock has toll'd; and hark, the bell
Of death beats slow! heard ye the note profound?
It pauses now; and now with rising knell
Flings to the hollow gale its sullen sound."

MASON.

WHEN Montoni was informed of the death of his wife, and considered that she had died without giving him the signature so necessary to the accomplishment of his wishes, no sense of decency restrained the expression of his resentment. Emily anxiously avoided his presence, and watched, during two days and two nights, with little intermission, by the corpse of her late aunt. Her mind deeply impressed with the unhappy fate of this object, she forgot all her faults, her unjust and imperious conduct to herself: and, remembering only

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her sufferings, thought of her only with tender compassion. Sometimes, however, she could not avoid musing upon the strange infatuation that had proved so fatal to her aunt, and had involved herself in a labyrinth of misfortune, from which she saw no means of escaping,—the marriage with Montoni. But, when she considered this circumstance, it was "more in sorrow than in anger," more for the purpose of indulging lamentation, than reproach.

In her pious cares she was not disturbed by Montoni, who not only avoided the chamber, where the remains of his wife were laid, but that part of the castle adjoining to it, as if he had apprehended a contagion in death. He seemed to have given no orders respecting the funeral, and Emily began to fear he meant to offer a new insult to the memory of Madame Montoni; but from this apprehension she was relieved, when, on the evening of the second day, Annette informed her, that the interment was to take place that night.

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She knew that Montoni would not attend; and it was so very grievous to her to think that the remains of her unfortunate aunt would pass to the grave without one relative, or friend, to pay them the last decent rites, that she determined to be deterred by no considerations for herself, from observing this duty. She would otherwise have shrunk from the circumstance of following them to the cold vault, to which they were to be carried by men, whose air and countenances seemed to stamp them for murderers, at the midnight hour of silence and privacy, which Montoni had chosen for committing, if possible, to oblivion the reliques of a woman, whom his harsh conduct had, at least, contributed to destroy.

Emily, shuddering with emotions of horror and grief, assisted by Annette, prepared the corpse for interment; and, having wrapt it in cerements, and covered it with a winding-sheet, they watched beside it, till past midnight, when they heard the approaching footsteps of the men, who

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were to lay it in its earthy bed. It was with difficulty that Emily overcame her emotion, when, the door of the chamber being thrown open, their gloomy countenances were seen by the glare of the torch they carried, and two of them, without speaking, lifted the body on their shoulders, while the third preceding them with the light, descended through the castle towards the grave, which was in the lower vault of the chapel within the castle walls.

They had to cross two courts, towards the east wing of the castle, which, adjoining the chapel, was, like it, in ruins: but the silence and gloom of these courts had now little power over Emily's mind, occupied as it was, with more mournful ideas; and she scarcely heard the low and dismal hooting of the night-birds, that roosted among the ivyed battlements of the ruin, or perceived the still flittings of the bat, which frequently crossed her way. But, when, having entered the chapel, and passed between the mouldering pillars of

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the aisles, the bearers stopped at a flight of steps, that led down to a low arched door, and, their comrade having descended to unlock it, she saw imperfectly the gloomy abyss beyond—saw the corpse of her aunt carried down these steps, and the ruffian-like figure, that stood with a torch at the bottom to receive it—all her fortitude was lost in emotions of inexpressible grief and terror. She turned to lean upon Annette, who was cold and trembling like herself, and she lingered so long on the summit of the flight, that the gleam of the torch began to die away on the pillars of the chapel, and the men were almost beyond her view. Then, the gloom around her awakening other fears, and a sense of what she considered to be her duty overcoming her reluctance, she descended to the vaults, following the echo of footsteps and the faint ray, that pierced the darkness, till the harsh grating of a distant door, that was opened to receive the corpse, again appalled her.

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After the pause of a moment, she went on, and, as she entered the vaults, saw between the arches, at some distance, the men lay down the body near the edge of an open grave, where stood another of Montoni's men and a priest, whom she did not observe, till he began the burial service; then lifting her eyes from the ground, she saw the venerable figure of the friar, and heard him in a low voice, equally solemn and affecting, perform the service for the dead. At the moment, in which they let down the body into the earth, the scene was such as only the dark pencil of a Domenichino, perhaps, could have done justice to. The fierce features and wild dress of the *Condottieri*, bending with their torches over the grave, into which the corpse was descending, were contrasted by the venerable figure of the monk, wrapt in long black garments, his cowl thrown back from his pale face, on which the light gleaming strongly shewed the lines of affliction softened by piety, and the few grey locks, which time

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had spared on his temples: while, beside him, stood the softer form of Emily, who leaned for support upon Annette; her face half averted, and shaded by a thin veil, that fell over her figure; and her mild and beautiful countenance fixed in grief so solemn as admitted not of tears, while she thus saw committed untimely to the earth her last relative and friend. The gleams, thrown between the arches of the vaults, where, here and there, the broken ground marked the spots in which other bodies had been recently interred, and the general obscurity beyond, were circumstances that alone would have led on the imagination of a spectator to scenes more horrible, than even that, which was pictured at the grave of the misguided and unfortunate Madame Montoni.

When the service was over, the friar regarded Emily with attention and surprise, and looked as if he wished to speak to her, but was restrained by the presence of the *Condottieri*, who, as they now led the way

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to the courts, amused themselves with jokes upon his holy order, which he endured in silence, demanding only to be conducted safely to his convent, and to which Emily listened with concern and even horror. When they reached the court, the monk gave her his blessing, and, after a lingering look of pity, turned away to the portal, whither one of the men carried a torch; while Annette, lighting another, preceded Emily to her apartment. The appearance of the friar, and the expression of tender compassion with which he had regarded her, had interested Emily, who, though it was at her earnest supplication that Montoni had consented to allow a priest to perform the last rites for his deceased wife, knew nothing concerning this person, till Annette now informed her, that he belonged to a monastery, situated among the mountains at a few miles distance. The Superior, who regarded Montoni and his associates, not only with aversion, but with terror, had probably feared to offend him

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by refusing his request, and had, therefore, ordered a monk to officiate at the funeral, who, with the meek spirit of a Christian, had overcome his reluctance to enter the walls of such a castle, by the wish of performing what he considered to be his duty, and, as the chapel was built on consecrated ground, had not objected to commit to it the remains of the late unhappy Madame Montoni.

Several days passed with Emily in total seclusion, and in a state of mind partaking both of terror for herself, and grief for the departed. She, at length, determined to make other efforts to persuade Montoni to permit her return to France. Why he should wish to detain her, she could scarcely dare to conjecture; but it was too certain that he did so, and the absolute refusal he had formerly given to her departure allowed her little hope that he would now consent to it. But the horror which his presence inspired, made her defer, from day to day, the mention of this subject; and

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at last she was awakened from her inactivity only by a message from him desiring her attendance at a certain hour. She began to hope he meant to resign, now that her aunt was no more, the authority he had usurped over her; till she recollected, that the estates, which had occasioned so much contention, were now her's, and she then feared Montoni was about to employ some stratagem for obtaining them, and that he would detain her his prisoner, till he succeeded. This thought, instead of overcoming her with despondency, roused all the latent powers of her fortitude into action; and the property, which she would willingly have resigned to secure the peace of her aunt, she resolved that no common sufferings of her own should ever compel her to give to Montoni. For Valancourt's sake also she determined to preserve these estates, since they would afford that competency, by which she hoped to secure the comfort of their future lives. As she thought of this, she indulged the tenderness

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as often, and anticipated the delight of that moment, when, with affectionate generosity, she might tell him they were his own. She saw the smile that lighted up his features—the affectionate regard, which spoke at once his joy and thanks; and at this instant she believed she could brave any suffering, which the evil spirit of Montoni might be preparing for her. Remembering then, for the first time since her aunt's death, the papers relative to the estates in question, she determined to search for them, as soon as her interview with Montoni was over.

With these resolutions she met him at the appointed time, and waited to hear his intention before she renewed her request. With him were Orsino and another officer, and both were standing near a table, covered with papers, which he appeared to be examining.

"I sent for you, Emily," said Montoni raising his head, "that you might be a witness in some business, which I am trans-

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acting with my friend Orsino. All that is required of you will be to sign your name to this paper:" he then took one up, hurried unintelligibly over some lines, and, laying it before her on the table, offered her a pen. She took it, and was going to write—when the design of Montoni came upon her mind like a flash of lightning; she trembled, let the pen fall, and refused to sign what she had not read. Montoni affected to laugh at her scruples, and taking up the paper again, pretended to read; but Emily, who still trembled on perceiving her danger, and was astonished that her own credulity had so nearly betrayed her, positively refused to sign any paper whatever. Montoni, for some time, persevered in affecting to ridicule this refusal; but, when he perceived by her steady perseverance, that she understood his design, he changed his manner, and bade her follow him to another room. There he told her, that he had been willing to spare himself and her the trouble of useless con-

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test, in an affair where his will was justice, and where she should find it law; and had, therefore, endeavoured to persuade, rather than to compel, her to the practice of her duty.

"I, as the husband of the late Signora Montoni," he added, "am the heir of all she possessed; the estates, therefore, which she refused to me in her life-time, can no longer be withheld, and, for your own sake, I would undeceive you respecting a foolish assertion she once made to you in my hearing—that these estates would be your's, if she died without resigning them to me. She knew at that moment she had no power to withhold them from me after her decease; and I think you have more sense, than to provoke my resentment by advancing an unjust claim. I am not in the habit of flattering, and you will therefore receive, as sincere, the praise I bestow, when I say that you possess an understanding superior to that of your sex; and that you have none of those contemptible

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foibles that frequently mark the female character --- such as avarice and the love of power, which latter makes women delight to contradict and to tease, when they cannot conquer. If I understand your disposition and your mind, you hold in sovereign contempt these common failings of your sex."

Montoni paused; and Emily remained silent and expecting; for she knew him too well, to believe he would condescend to such flattery, unless he thought it would promote his own interest; and though he had forborne to name vanity among the foibles of women, it was evident that he considered it to be a predominant one, since he designed to sacrifice to her's the character and understanding of her whole sex.

"Judging as I do," resumed Montoni, "I cannot believe you will oppose where you know you cannot conquer, or indeed, that you would wish to conquer, or be avaricious of any property, when you have

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not justice on your side. I think it proper, however, to acquaint you with the alternative. If you have a just opinion of the subject in question, you shall be allowed a safe conveyance to France, within a short period; but, if you are so unhappy as to be misled by the late assertion of the Signora, you shall remain my prisoner, till you are convinced of your error."

Emily calmly said,

"I am not so ignorant, Signor, of the laws on this subject, as to be misled by the assertion of any person. The law, in the present instance, gives me the estates in question, and my own hand shall never betray my right."

"I have been mistaken in my opinion of you, it appears," rejoined Montoni, sternly. "You speak boldly, and presumptuously, upon a subject, which you do not understand. For once, I am willing to pardon the conceit of ignorance; the weakness of your sex, too, from which, it seems, you are not exempt, claims some

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allowance; but, if you persist in this strain --- you have every-thing to fear from my justice."

"From your justice, Signor," rejoined Emily, "I have nothing to fear—I have only to hope."

Montoni looked at her with vexation, and seemed considering what to say. "I find that you are weak enough," he resumed, "to credit the idle assertion I alluded to! For your own sake I lament this; as to me, it is of little consequence. Your credulity can punish only yourself; and I must pity the weakness of mind which leads you to so much suffering as you are compelling me to prepare for you."

"You may find, perhaps, Signor," said Emily, with mild dignity, "that the strength of my mind is equal to the justice of my cause; and that I can endure with fortitude, when it is in resistance of oppression."

"You speak like a heroine," said Mon-

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toni, contemptuously; "we shall see whether you can suffer like one."

Emily was silent, and he left the room.

Recollecting that it was for Valancourt's sake she had thus resisted, she now smiled complacently upon the threatened sufferings, and retired to the spot which her aunt had pointed out as the repository of the papers relative to the estates, where she found them as described; and, since she knew of no better place of concealment than this, returned them without examining their contents, being fearful of discovery, while she should attempt a perusal.

To her own solitary chamber she once more returned, and there thought again of the late conversation with Montoni, and of the evil she might expect from opposition to his will. But his power did not appear so terrible to her imagination, as it was wont to do: a sacred pride was in her heart, that taught it to swell against the pressure of injustice, and almost to glory in

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the quiet sufferance of ills, in a cause which had also the interest of Valancourt for its object. For the first time, she felt the full extent of her own superiority to Montoni, and despised the authority which, till now, she had only feared.

As she sat musing, a peal of laughter rose from the terrace, and, on going to the casement, she saw, with inexpressible surprise, three ladies, dressed in the gala habit of Venice, walking with several gentlemen below. She gazed in an astonishment that made her remain at the window, regardless of being observed, till the group passed under it; and, one of the strangers looking up, she perceived the features of Signora Livona, with whose manners she had been so much charmed, the day after her arrival at Venice, and who had been there introduced at the table of Montoni. This discovery occasioned her an emotion of doubtful joy; for it was matter of joy and comfort to know, that a person, of a mind so gentle as that of Signora Livona seemed

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to be, was near her; yet there was something so extraordinary in her being at this castle, circumstanced as it now was, and evidently, by the gaiety of her air, with her own consent, that a very painful surmise arose concerning her character. But the thought was so shocking to Emily, whose affection the fascinating manners of the Signora had won, and appeared so improbable, when she remembered these manners, that she dismissed it almost instantly.

On Annette's appearance, however, she enquired concerning these strangers; and the former was as eager to tell, as Emily was to learn.

"They are just come, ma'amselle," said Annette, "with two Signors from Venice, and I was glad to see such Christian faces once again.—But what can they mean by coming here? They must surely be stark mad to come freely to such a place as this! Yet they do come freely, for they seem merry enough, I am sure."

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"They were taken prisoners, perhaps?" said Emily.

"Taken prisoners!" exclaimed Annette; "no, indeed, ma'amselle, not they. I remember one of them very well at Venice: she came two or three times to the Signor's, you know, ma'amselle, and it was said, but I did not believe a word of it—it was said that the Signor liked her better than he should do. Then why, says I, bring her to my lady! Very true, said Ludovico; but he looked as if he knew more too."

Emily desired Annette would endeavour to learn who these ladies were, as well as all she could concerning them; and she then changed the subject, and spoke of distant France.

"Ah, ma'amselle! we shall never see it more!" said Annette, almost weeping.—"I must come on my travels, forsooth!"

Emily tried to soothe and to cheer her, with a hope, in which she scarcely herself indulged.

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"How—how, ma'amselle, could you leave France, and leave Mons. Valancourt, too?" said Annette, sobbing. "I —I—am sure, if Ludovico had been in France, I would never have left it."

"Why do you lament quitting France, then?" said Emily, trying to smile, "since, if you had remained there, you would not have found Ludovico?"

"Ah, ma'amselle! I only wish I was out of this frightful castle, serving you in France, and I would care about nothing else!"

"Thank you, my good Annette, for your affectionate regard; the time will come, I hope, when you may remember the expression of that wish with pleasure."

Annette departed on her business, and Emily sought to lose the sense of her own cares, in the visionary scenes of the poet; but she had again to lament the irresistible force of circumstances over the taste and powers of the mind; and that it requires a spirit at ease to be sensible even to the

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abstract pleasures of pure intellect. The enthusiasm of genius, with all its pictured scenes, now appeared cold and dim. As she mused upon the book before her, she involuntarily exclaimed, "Are these, indeed, the passages that have so often given me exquisite delight? Where did the charm exist?—Was it in my mind, or in the imagination of the poet? It lived in each," said she, pausing. "But the fire of the poet is vain, if the mind of his reader is not tempered like his own, however it may be inferior to his in power."

Emily would have pursued this train of thinking, because it relieved her from more painful reflection, but she found again, that thought cannot always be controlled by will; and her's returned to the consideration of her own situation.

In the evening, not choosing to venture down to the ramparts, where she would be exposed to the rude gaze of Montoni's associates, she walked for air in the gallery adjoining her chamber; on reaching the

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further end of which she heard distant sounds of merriment and laughter. It was the wild uproar of riot, not the cheering gaiety of tempered mirth; and seemed to come from that part of the castle where Montoni usually was. Such sounds at this time, when her aunt had been so few days dead, particularly shocked her, consistent as they were with the late conduct of Montoni.

As she listened, she thought she distinguished female voices mingling with the laughter, and this confirmed her worst surmise concerning the character of Signora Livona and her companions. It was evident that they had not been brought hither by compulsion; and she beheld herself in the remote wilds of the Apennine, surrounded by men, whom she considered to be little less than ruffians, and their worst associates, amid scenes of vice, from which her soul recoiled in horror. It was at this moment, when the scenes of the present and the future opened to her imagina-

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tion, that the image of Valancourt failed in its influence, and her resolution shook with dread. She thought she understood all the horrors, which Montoni was preparing for her, and shrunk from an encounter with such remorseless vengeance, as he could inflict. The disputed estates she now almost determined to yield at once, whenever he should again call upon her, that she might regain safety and freedom; but, then, the remembrance of Valancourt would steal to her heart, and plunge her into the distractions of doubt.

She continued walking in the gallery, till evening threw its melancholy twilight through the painted casements, and deepened the gloom of the oak wainscoting around her; while the distant perspective of the corridor was so much obscured, as to be discernible only by the glimmering window, that terminated it.

Along the vaulted halls and passages below, peals of laughter echoed faintly, at intervals, to this remote part of the castle,

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and seemed to render the succeeding stillness more dreary. Emily, however, unwilling to return to her more forlorn chamber, whither Annette was not yet come, still paced the gallery. As she passed the door of the apartment, where she had once dared to lift the veil which discovered to her a spectacle so horrible, that she had never after remembered it but with emotions of indescribable awe, this remembrance suddenly recurred. It now brought with it reflections more terrible, than it had yet done, which the late conduct of Montoni occasioned; and, hastening to quit the gallery, while she had power to do so, she heard a sudden step behind her.—It might be that of Annette; but, turning fearfully to look, she saw, through the gloom, a tall figure following her, and all the horrors of that chamber rushed upon her mind. In the next moment, she found herself clasped in the arms of some person, and heard a deep voice murmur in her ear.

When she had power to speak, or to dis-

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tinguish articulated sounds, she demanded who detained her.

"It is I," replied the voice—"Why are you thus alarmed?"

She looked on the face of the person who spoke, but the feeble light that gleamed through the high casement at the end of the gallery, did not permit her to distinguish the features.

"Whoever you are," said Emily, in a trembling voice, "for heaven's sake let me go!"

"My charming Emily," said the man, "why will you shut yourself up in this obscure place, when there is so much gaiety below? Return with me to the cedar parlour, where you will be the fairest ornament of the party;—you shall not repent the exchange."

Emily disdained to reply, and still endeavoured to liberate herself.

"Promise that you will come," he continued, "and I will release you imme-

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diately; but first give me a reward for so doing."

"Who are you?" demanded Emily, in a tone of mingled terror and indignation, while she still struggled for liberty—"who are you, that have the cruelty thus to insult me?"

"Why call me cruel?" said the man; "I would remove you from this dreary solitude to a merry party below. Do you not know me?"

Emily now faintly remembered that he was one of the officers who were with Montoni when she attended him in the morning. "I thank you for the kindness of your intention," she replied, without appearing to understand him, "but I wish for nothing so much as that you would leave me."

"Charming Emily!" said he, "give up this foolish whim for solitude, and come with me to the company, and eclipse the beauties who make part of it; you, only,

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are worthy of my love." He attempted to kiss her hand, but the strong impulse of her indignation gave her power to liberate herself, and she fled towards the chamber. She closed the door before he reached it; having secured which, she sunk in a chair, overcome by terror and by the exertion she had made, while she heard his voice, and his attempts to open the door, without having the power to raise herself. At length, she perceived him depart, and had remained, listening, for a considerable time, and was somewhat revived by not hearing any sound, when suddenly she remembered the door of the private staircase, and that he might enter that way, since it was fastened only on the other side. She then employed herself in endeavouring to secure it, in the manner she had formerly done. It appeared to her, that Montoni had already commenced his scheme of vengeance, by withdrawing from her his protection, and she repented of the rashness that had made her brave the power of such a man.

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To retain the estates seemed to be now utterly impossible; and to preserve her life, perhaps her honour, she resolved, if she should escape the horrors of this night, to give up all claims to the estates, on the morrow, provided Montoni would suffer her to depart from Udolpho.

When she had come to this decision, her mind become more composed, though she still anxiously listened, and often started at ideal sounds, that appeared to issue from the staircase.

Having sat in darkness for some hours, during all which time Annette did not appear, she began to have serious apprehensions for her; but, not daring to venture down into the castle, was compelled to remain in uncertainty, as to the cause of this unusual absence.

Emily often stole to the staircase-door to listen if any step approached, but still no sound alarmed her; determining, however, to watch during the night, she once more rested on her dark and desolate couch,

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and bathed the pillow with innocent tears. She thought of her deceased parents and then of the absent Valancourt, and frequently called upon their names; for the profound stillness that now reigned, was propitious to the musing sorrow of her mind.

While she thus remained, her ear suddenly caught the notes of distant music, to which she listened attentively, and, soon perceiving this to be the instrument she had formerly heard at midnight, she rose, and stepped softly to the casement, to which the sounds appeared to come from a lower room.

In a few moments, their soft melody was accompanied by a voice so full of pathos, that it evidently sang not of imaginary sorrows. Its sweet and peculiar tones she thought she had somewhere heard before; yet, if this was not fancy, it was, at most, a very faint recollection. It stole over her mind, amidst the anguish of her present suffering, like a celestial strain, sooth-

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ing, and re-assuring her:—"Pleasant as the gale of spring, that sighs on the hunter's ear, when he awakens from dreams of joy, and has heard the music of the spirits of the hill*."

But her emotion can scarcely be imagined, when she heard sung, with the taste and simplicity of true feeling, one of the popular airs of her native province, to which she had so often listened with delight, when a child, and which she had so often heard her father repeat! to this well-known song, never, till now, heard but in her native country, her heart melted, while the memory of past times returned. The pleasant, peaceful scenes of Gascony, the tenderness and goodness of her parents, the taste and simplicity of her former life—all rose to her fancy, and formed a picture, so sweet and glowing, so strikingly contrasted with the scenes, the characters and the dangers, which now surrounded her—that her mind could not bear to pause upon

* Ossian.

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the retrospect, and shrunk at the acuteness of its own sufferings.

Her sighs were deep and convulsed; she could no longer listen to the strain, that had so often charmed her to tranquillity, and she withdrew from the casement to a remote part of the chamber. But she was not yet beyond the reach of the music; she heard the measure change, and the succeeding air called her again to the window, for she immediately recollected it to be the same she had formerly heard in the fishing-house in Gascony. Assisted, perhaps, by the mystery, which had then accompanied this strain, it had made so deep an impression on her memory, that she had never since entirely forgotten it; and the manner in which it was now sung, convinced her, however unaccountable the circumstance appeared, that this was the same voice she had then heard. Surprise soon yielded to other emotions; a thought darted, like lightning, upon her mind, which discovered a train of hopes that re-

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vived all her spirits. Yet these hopes were so new, so unexpected, so astonishing, that she did not dare to trust, though she could not resolve to discourage them. She sat down by the casement, breathless, and overcome with the alternate emotions of hope and fear; then rose again, leaned from the window, that she might catch a nearer sound, listened, now doubting and then believing, softly exclaimed the name of Valancourt, and then sunk again into the chair. Yes, it was possible, that Valancourt was near her, and she recollected circumstances, which induced her to believe it was his voice she had just heard. She remembered he had more than once said that the fishing-house, where she had formerly listened to this voice and air, and where she had seen pencilled sonnets, addressed to herself, had been his favourite haunt, before he had been made known to her; there, too, she had herself unexpectedly met him. It appeared, from these circumstances, more than probable, that he

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was the musician who had formerly charmed her attention, and the author of the lines which had expressed such tender admiration; who else, indeed, could it be? She was unable, at that time, to form a conjecture as to the writer; but since her acquaintance with Valancourt, whenever he had mentioned the fishing-house to have been known to him, she had not scrupled to believe that he was the author of the sonnets.

As these considerations passed over her mind, joy, fear, and tenderness contended at her heart; she leaned again from the casement, to catch the sounds which might confirm or destroy her hope, though she did not recollect to have ever heard him sing: but the voice and the instrument now ceased.

She considered for a moment whether she should venture to speak: then, not choosing, lest it should be he, to mention his name, and yet too much interested to neglect the opportunity of inquiring, she

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called from the casement, "Is that song from Gascony?" Her anxious attention was not cheered by any reply; every thing remained silent. Her impatience increasing with her fears, she repeated the question, but still no sound was heard, except the sighing of the wind among the battlements above; and she endeavoured to console herself with a belief, that the stranger, whoever he was, had retired, before she had spoken, beyond the reach of her voice, which, it appeared certain, had Valancourt heard and recognized, he would instantly have replied to. Presently, however, she considered, that a motive of prudence, and not an accidental removal, might occasion his silence; but the surmise, that led to this reflection, suddenly changed her hope and joy to terror and grief; for, if Valancourt were in the castle, it was too probable that he was here a prisoner, taken with some of his countrymen, many of whom were at that time engaged in the wars of Italy, or in-

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tercepted in some attempt to reach her. Had he even recollected Emily's voice, he would have feared, in these circumstances, to reply to it in the presence of the men who guarded his prison.

What so lately she had eagerly hoped she now believed she dreaded;—dreaded to know that Valancourt was near her; and, while she was anxious to be relieved from her apprehension for his safety, she still was unconscious, that a hope of soon seeing him struggled with the fear.

She remained listening at the casement, till the air began to freshen, and one high mountain in the east to glimmer with the morning; when, wearied with anxiety, she retired to her couch, where she found it utterly impossible to sleep, for joy, tenderness, doubt, and apprehension, distracted her during the whole night. Now she rose from the couch, and opened the casement to listen; then she would pace the room with impatient steps, and, at length, return with despondence to her pillow. Never

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did hours appear to move so heavily, as those of this anxious night; after which she hoped that Annette might appear, and conclude her present state of torturing suspense.

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CHAP. VI.

"..... might we but hear
The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs."

MILTON.

IN the morning Emily was relieved from her fears for Annette, who came at an early hour.

"Here were fine doings in the castle, last night, ma'amselle," said she, as soon as she entered the room,—"fine doings, indeed! Was you not frightened, ma'amselle, at not seeing me?"

"I was alarmed both on your account and on my own," replied Emily—"What detained you?"

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" Aye, I said so, I told him so; but it would not do. It was not my fault, indeed, ma'amselle, for I could not get out. That rogue Ludovico locked me up again."

" Locked you up!" said Emily, with displeasure, " Why do you permit Ludovico to lock you up?"

" Holy Saints!" exclaimed Annette, " How can I help it! If he will lock the door, ma'amselle, and take away the key, how am I to get out, unless I jump through the window? But that I should not mind so much, if the casements here were not all so high; one can hardly scramble up to them on the inside, and one should break one's neck, I suppose, going down on the outside. But you know, I dare say, ma'am, what a hurly burly the castle was in last night; you must have heard some of the uproar."

" What were they disputing, then;" said Emily.

" No, ma'amselle, not fighting, but al-

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most as good, for I believe there was not one of the Signors sober; and what is more, not one of those fine ladies sober, either. I thought, when I saw them first, that all those fine silks and fine veils,—why, ma'amselle, their veils were worked with silver! and fine trimmings—boded no good—I guessed what they were!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Emily, "what will become of me!"

"Aye, ma'am, Ludovico said much the same thing of me." 'Good God!' said he, 'Annette, what is to become of you, if you are to go running about the castle among all these drunken Signors?"

"O! says I, for that matter, I only want to go to my young lady's chamber, and I have only to go, you know, along the vaulted passage and across the great hall and up the marble staircase and along the north gallery and through the west wing of the castle, and I am in the corridor in a minute." 'Are you so?' says he, 'and what is to become of you, if

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you meet any of those noble cavaliers in the way?' Well, says I, if you think there is danger then, go with me, and guard me; I am never afraid when you are by. 'What! says he, when I am scarcely recovered of one wound, shall I put myself in the way of getting another? for if any of the cavaliers meet you, they will fall a-fighting with me directly. No, no,' says he, 'I will cut the way shorter, than through the vaulted passage and up the marble staircase and along the north gallery, and through the west wing of the castle, for you shall stay here, Annette; you shall not go out of this room, to-night.' So with that, I says"-------

"Well, well," said Emily, impatiently, and anxious to enquire on another subject —"so he locked you up?"

"Yes, he did, indeed, ma'amselle, notwithstanding all I could say to the contrary; and Catarina and I and he staid there all night. And in a few minutes after I was not so vexed, for there came Signor Ve-

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rezzi roaring along the passage, like a mad bull, and he mistook Ludovico's hall for old Carlo's; so he tried to burst open the door, and called out for more wine, for that he had drunk all the flasks dry, and was dying of thirst. So we were all as still as night, that he might suppose there was nobody in the room; but the Signor was as cunning as the best of us, and kept calling out at the door. 'Come forth, my ancient hero!' said he, 'here is no enemy at the gate, that you need hide yourself: come forth, my valorous Signor Steward!' Just then old Carlo opened his door, and he came with a flask in his hand; for, as soon as the Signor saw him, he was as tame as could be, and followed him away as naturally as a dog does a butcher with a piece of meat in his basket. All this I saw through the key-hole. 'Well, Annette, said Ludovico, jeeringly, shall I let you out now?' O no, says I, I would not"——

"I have some questions to ask you on

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another subject," interrupted Emily, quite wearied by this story. "Do you know whether there are any prisoners in the castle, and whether they are confined at this end of the edifice?"

"I was not in the way, ma'amselle," replied Annette, "when the first party came in from the mountains, and the last party is not come back yet, so I don't know, whether there are any prisoners; but it is expected back to-night, or to-morrow, and I shall know then, perhaps."

Emily enquired if she had ever heard the servants talk of prisoners.

"Ah ma'amselle!" said Annette archly, "now I dare say you are thinking of Monsieur Valancourt, and that he may have come among the armies, which, they say, are come from our country, to fight against this state, and that he has met with some of *our* people, and is taken captive. O Lord! how glad I should be, if it was so!"

"Would you, indeed, be glad?" said Emily, in a tone of mournful reproach.

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"To be sure I should, ma'am," replied Annette, "and would not you be glad too, to see Signor Valancourt? I don't know any chevalier I like better, I have a very great regard for the Signor, truly."

"Your regard for him cannot be doubted," said Emily, "since you wish to see him a prisoner."

"Why no, ma'amselle, not a prisoner either; but one must be glad to see him, you know. And it was only the other night I dreamt—I dreamt I saw him drive into the castle-yard all in a coach and six, and dressed out, with a laced coat and a sword, like a lord as he is."

Emily could not forbear smiling at Annette's ideas of Valancourt, and repeated her enquiry, whether she had heard the servants talk of prisoners.

"No, ma'amselle," replied she, "never; and lately they have done nothing but talk of the apparition, that has been walking about of a night on the ramparts, and that frightened the sentinels into fits. It came

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among them like a flash of fire, they say, and they all fell down in a row, till they came to themselves again; and then it was gone, and nothing to be seen but the old castle walls; so they helped one another up again as fast as they could. You would not believe, ma'amselle, though I shewed you the very cannon where it used to appear."

"And are you, indeed, so simple, Annette," said Emily, smiling at this curious exaggèration of the circumstances she had witnessed, "as to credit these stories?"

"Credit them, ma'amselle! why all the world could not persuade me out of them. Roberto and Sebastian, and half a dozen more of them went into fits! To be sure, there was no occasion for that; I said, myself, there was no need of that, for, says I, when the enemy comes, what a pretty figure they will cut, if they are to fall down in fits, all of a row! The enemy won't be so civil, perhaps, as to walk off like the ghost, and leave them to help one another up, but will fall to, cutting and

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slashing, till he makes them all rise up dead men. No, no, says I, there is reason in all things: though I might have fallen down in a fit, that was no rule for them, being, because it was no business of mine to look gruff and fight battles."

Emily endeavoured to correct the superstitious weakness of Annette, though she could not entirely subdue her own; to which the latter only replied, "Nay, ma'amselle, you will believe nothing; you are almost as bad as the Signor himself, who was in a great passion when they told him of what had happened, and swore that the first man, who repeated such nonsense, should be thrown into the dungeon under the east turret. This was a hard punishment too, for only talking nonsense, as he called it; but I dare say he had other reasons for calling it so, than you have, ma'am."

Emily looked displeased, and made no reply. As she mused upon the recollected appearance, which had lately so much

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alarmed her, and considered the circumstances of the figure having stationed itself opposite to her casement, she was for a moment inclined to believe it was Valancourt whom she had seen. Yet, if it was he, why did he not speak to her, when he had the opportunity of doing so—and, if he was a prisoner in the castle, and he could be here in no other character, how could he obtain the means of walking abroad on the rampart? Thus she was utterly unable to decide, whether the musician and the form she had observed were the same, or, if they were, whether this was Valancourt. She, however, desired that Annette would endeavour to learn whether any prisoners were in the castle, and also their names.

"O dear, ma'amselle!" said Annette, "I forgot to tell you what you bade me ask about—the ladies, as they call themselves, who are lately come to Udolpho. Why that, Signora Livona, that the Signor brought to see my late lady at Venice, is

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his mistress now, and was little better then, I dare say. And Ludovico says (but pray be secret, ma'am) that his *Excellenza* introduced her only to impose upon the world, that had begun to make free with her character. So when people saw my lady notice her, they thought what they had heard must be scandal. The other two are the mistresses of Signor Verezzi and Signor Bertolini; and Signor Montoni invited them all to the castle; and so, yesterday, he gave a great entertainment; and there they were, all drinking Tuscany wine and all sorts, and laughing and singing, till they made the castle ring again. But I thought they were dismal sounds, so soon after my poor lady's death too; and they brought to my mind what she would have thought, if she had heard them—but she cannot hear them now, poor soul! said I."

Emily turned away to conceal her emotion, and then desired Annette to go, and make enquiry concerning the prisoners

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that might be in the castle, but conjured her to do it with caution, and on no account to mention her name, or that of Monsieur Valancourt.

"Now I think of it, ma'amselle," said Annette, "I do believe there are prisoners, for I overheard one of the Signor's men, yesterday, in the servants' hall, talking something about ransoms, and saying what a fine thing it was for his *Excellenza* to catch up men, and they were as good booty as any other, because of the ransoms. And the other man was grumbling, and saying it was fine enough for the Signor, but none so fine for his soldiers, because, said he, we don't go shares there."

This information heightened Emily's impatience to know more, and Annette immediately departed on her enquiry.

The late resolution of Emily to resign her estates to Montoni, now gave way to new considerations; the possibility that Valancourt was near her, revived her fortitude, and she determined to brave the

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threatened vengeance, at least, till she could be assured whether he was really in the castle. She was in this temper of mind, when she received a message from Montoni, requiring her attendance in the cedar parlour, which she obeyed with trembling, and, on her way thither, endeavoured to animate her fortitude with the idea of Valancourt.

Montoni was alone. "I sent for you," said he, "to give you another opportunity of retracting your late mistaken assertions concerning the Languedoc estates. I will condescend to advise, where I may command.—If you are really deluded by an opinion, that you have any right to these estates, at least do not persist in the error—an error which you may perceive, too late, has been fatal to you. Dare my resentment no further, but sign the papers."

"If I have no right in these estates, sir," said Emily, "of what service can it be to you, that I should sign any papers concerning them? If the lands are yours by

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law, you certainly may possess them without my interference, or my consent."

"I will have no more argument," said Montoni, with a look that made her tremble. "What had I but trouble to expect, when I condescended to reason with a baby! But I will be trifled with no longer: let the recollection of your aunt's sufferings, in consequence of her folly and obstinacy, teach you a lesson.—Sign the papers."

Emily's resolution was for a moment awed:—she shrunk at the recollections he revived, and from the vengeance he threatened; but then, the image of Valancourt, who so long had loved her, and who was now, perhaps, so near her, came to her heart, and, together with the strong feelings of indignation, with which she had always, from her infancy, regarded an act of injustice, inspired her with a noble though imprudent, courage.

"Sign the papers," said Montoni, more impatiently than before.

"Never, sir," replied Emily; "that re-

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quest would have proved to me the injustice of your claim, had I even been ignorant of my right."

Montoni turned pale with anger, while his quivering lip and lurking eye made her almost repent the boldness of her speech.

"Then all my vengeance falls upon you," he exclaimed, with an horrible oath. "And think not it shall be delayed. Neither the estates in Languedoc, or Gascony, shall be your's; you have dared to question my right—now dare to question my power. I have a punishment which you think not of; it is terrible! This night—this very night——"

"This night!" repeated another voice.

Montoni paused, and turned half round, but, seeming to recollect himself, he proceeded in a lower tone.

"You have lately seen one terrible example of obstinacy and folly; yet this, it appears, has not been sufficient to deter you.—I could tell you of others——

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I could make you tremble at the bare recital."

He was interrupted by a groan, which seemed to rise from underneath the chamber they were in; and, as he threw a glance round it, impatience and rage flashed from his eyes, yet something like a shade of fear passed over his countenance. Emily sat down in a chair, near the door, for the various emotions she had suffered now almost overcame her; but Montoni paused scarcely an instant, and, commanding his features, resumed his discourse in a lower, yet sterner voice.

"I say, I could give you other instances of my power and of my character, which it seems you do not understand, or you would not defy me.—I could tell you, that when once my resolution is taken—But I am talking to a baby. Let me, however, repeat, that terrible as are the examples I could recite, the recital could not now benefit you; for, though your re-

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pentance would put an immediate end to opposition, it would not now appease my indignation—I will have vengeance as well as justice."

Another groan filled the pause which Montoni made.

"Leave the room instantly!" said he, seeming not to notice this strange occurrence. Without power to implore his pity, she rose to go, but found that she could not support herself; awe and terror overcame her, and she sunk again into the chair.

"Quit my presence!" cried Montoni. "This affectation of fear ill becomes the heroine who has just dared to brave my indignation."

"Did you hear nothing, Signor?" said Emily, trembling, and still unable to leave the room.

"I heard my own voice," rejoined Montoni, sternly.

"And nothing else?" said Emily, speak-

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ing with difficulty.—"There again! Do you hear nothing now?"

"Obey my order," repeated Montoni. "And for these fool's tricks—I will soon discover by whom they are practised."

Emily again rose, and exerted herself to the utmost to leave the room, while Montoni followed her; but, instead of calling aloud to his servants to search the chamber, as he had formerly done on a similar occurrence, passed to the ramparts.

As, in her way to the corridor, she rested for a moment at an open casement, Emily saw a party of Montoni's troops winding down a distant mountain, whom she noticed no further than as they brought to her mind the wretched prisoners they were, perhaps, bringing to the castle. At length, having reached her apartment, she threw herself upon the couch, overcome with the new horrors of her situation. Her thoughts, lost in tumult and perplexity, she could neither repent of, or approve, her

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late conduct; she could only remember, that she was in the power of a man who had no principle of action—but his will; and the astonishment and terrors of superstition, which had, for a moment, so strongly assailed her, now yielded to those of reason.

She was, at length, roused from the reverie which engaged her, by a confusion of distant voices, and a clattering of hoofs, that seemed to come, on the wind, from the courts. A sudden hope, that some good was approaching, seized her mind, till she remembered the troops she had observed from the casement, and concluded this to be the party which Annette had said were expected at Udolpho.

Soon after, she heard voices faintly from the halls, and the noise of horses' feet sunk away in the wind; silence ensued. Emily listened anxiously for Annette's step in the corridor, but a pause of total stillness continued, till again the castle seemed to be all tumult and confusion. She heard the echoes

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of many footsteps, passing to and fro in the halls and avenues below, and then busy tongues were loud on the rampart. Having hurried to her casement, she perceived Montoni, with some of his officers, leaning on the walls, and pointing from them; while several soldiers were employed at the further end of the rampart about some cannon; and she continued to observe them, careless of the passing time.

Annette at length appeared, but brought no intelligence of Valancourt; "For, ma'amselle," said she, "all the people pretend to know nothing about any prisoners. But here is a fine piece of business! The rest of the party are just arrived, ma'am; they came scampering in, as if they would have broken their necks; one scarcely knew whether the man, or his horse, would get within the gates first. And they have brought word—and such news! they have brought word, that a party of the enemy, as they call them, are coming towards the castle; so we shall have all the officers of

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justice, I suppose, besieging it! all those terrible-looking fellows one used to see at Venice."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Emily, fervently, "there is yet a hope left for me, then!"

"What mean you, ma'amselle? Do you wish to fall into the hands of those sad-looking men! Why I used to shudder as I passed them, and should have guessed what they were, if Ludovico had not told me."

"We cannot be in worse hands than at present," replied Emily, unguardedly; "but what reason have you to suppose these are officers of justice?"

"Why *our* people, ma'am, are all in such a fright, and a fuss; and I don't know any thing but the fear of justice, that could make them so. I used to think nothing on earth could fluster them, unless, indeed, it was a ghost, or so; but now, some of them are for hiding down in the vaults under the castle; but you must not tell the Signor

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this, ma'amselle, and I overheard two of them talking——Holy Mother! what makes you look so sad, ma'amselle? You don't hear what I say!"

"Yes, I do, Annette; pray proceed."

"Well, ma'amselle, all the castle is in such hurly-burly. Some of the men are loading the cannon, and some are examining the great gates, and the walls all round, and are hammering and patching up, just as if all those repairs had never been made, that were so long about. But what is to become of me and you, ma'amselle, and Ludovico? O! when I hear the sound of the cannon, I shall die with fright. If I could but catch the great gate open for one minute, I would be even with it for shutting me within these walls so long!—it should never see me again."

Emily caught the latter words of Annette. "O! if you could find it open, but for one moment!" she exclaimed, "my peace might yet be saved!" The heavy groan she uttered, and the wildness of her

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look, terrified Annette, still more than her words; who entreated Emily to explain the meaning of them, to whom it suddenly occurred, that Ludovico might be of some service, if there should be a possibility of escape, and who repeated the substance of what had passed between Montoni and herself, but conjured her to mention this to no person except to Ludovico. "It may, perhaps, be in his power," she added, "to effect our escape. Go to him, Annette, tell him what I have to apprehend, and what I have already suffered; but entreat him to be secret, and to lose no time in attempting to release us. If he is willing to undertake this, he shall be amply rewarded. I cannot speak with him myself, for we might be observed, and then effectual care would be taken to prevent our flight. But be quick, Annette, and, above all, be discreet—I will await your return in this apartment."

The girl, whose honest heart had been much affected by the recital, was now as

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eager to obey, as Emily was to employ her, and she immediately quitted the room.

Emily's surprise increased, as she reflected upon Annette's intelligence. "Alas!" said she, "what can the officers of justice do against an armed castle? these cannot be such." Upon further consideration, however, she concluded, that Montoni's bands having plundered the country round, the inhabitants had taken arms, and were coming with the officers of police and a party of soldiers, to force their way into the castle. "But they know not," thought she, "its strength, or the armed numbers within it. Alas! except from flight, I have nothing to hope!"

Montoni, though not precisely what Emily apprehended him to be—a captain of banditti—had employed his troops in enterprises not less daring, or less atrocious, than such a character would have undertaken. They had not only pillaged, whenever opportunity offered, the helpless tra-

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veller, but had attacked, and plundered the villas of several persons, which, being situated among the solitary recesses of the mountains, were totally unprepared for resistance. In these expeditions the commanders of the party did not appear, and the men, partly disguised, had sometimes been mistaken for common robbers, and, at others, for bands of the foreign enemy, who at that period invaded the country. But, though they had already pillaged several mansions, and brought home considerable treasures, they had ventured to approach only one castle, in the attack of which they were assisted by other troops of their own order; from this, however, they were vigorously repulsed, and pursued by some of the foreign enemy, who were in league with the besieged. Montoni's troops fled precipitately towards Udolpho, but were so closely tracked over the mountains, that when they reached one of the heights in the neighbourhood of the castle, and looked back upon the road, they perceived

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the enemy winding among the cliffs below, and not more than a league distant. Upon this discovery, they hastened forward with increased speed, to prepare Montoni for the enemy; and it was their arrival which had thrown the castle into such confusion and tumult.

As Emily awaited anxiously some information from below, she now saw from her casements a body of troops pour over the neighbouring heights; and, though Annette had been gone a very short time, and had a difficult and dangerous business to accomplish, her impatience for intelligence became painful; she listened; opened her door; and often went out upon the corridor to meet her.

At length she heard a footstep approach her chamber; and, on opening the door, saw not Annette, but old Carlo! New fears rushed upon her mind. He said he came from the Signor, who had ordered him to inform her, that she must be ready to depart from Udolpho immediately, for

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that the castle was about to be besieged; and that mules were preparing to convey her, with her guides, to a place of safety.

"Of safety!" exclaimed Emily, thoughtlessly; "has, then, the Signor so much consideration for me?"

Carlo looked upon the ground, and made no reply. A thousand opposite emotions agitated Emily, successively, as she listened to old Carlo; those of joy, grief, distrust and apprehension, appeared, and vanished from her mind, with the quickness of lightning. One moment, it seemed impossible that Montoni could take this measure merely for her preservation; and so very strange was his sending her from the castle at all, that she could attribute it only to the design of carrying into execution the new scheme of vengeance, with which he had menaced her. In the next instant, it appeared so desirable to quit the castle, under any circumstances, that she could not but rejoice in the prospect, believing that change must be for the better,

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till she remembered the probability of Valancourt being detained in it, when sorrow and regret usurped her mind, and she wished, much more fervently than she had yet done, that it might not be his voice which she had heard.

Carlo having reminded her that she had no time to lose, for that the enemy were within sight of the castle, Emily entreated him to inform her whither she was to go; and, after some hesitation, he said he had received no orders to tell; but, on her repeating the question, replied, that he believed she was to be carried into Tuscany.

"To Tuscany!" exclaimed Emily—"and why thither?"

Carlo answered, that he knew nothing further, than that she was to be lodged in a cottage on the borders of Tuscany, at the feet of the Apennines---"Not a day's journey distant," said he.

Emily now dismissed him; and, with trembling hands, prepared the small package that she meant to take with her; while

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she was employed about which, Annette returned.

"O ma'amselle" said she, "nothing can be done! Ludovico says the new porter is more watchful even than Barnardine was, and we might as well throw ourselves in the way of a dragon as in his. Ludovico is almost as broken-hearted as you are, ma'am, on my account, he says, and I am sure I shall never live to hear the cannon fire twice!"

She now began to weep, but revived upon hearing of what had just occurred, and entreated Emily to take her with her.

"That I will do most willingly," replied Emily, "if Signor Montoni permits it;" to which Annette made no reply, but ran out of the room, and immediately sought Montoni, who was on the terrace, surrounded by his officers, where she began her petition. He sharply bade her go into the castle, and absolutely refused her request. Annette, however, not only pleaded for herself, but for Ludovico; and Montoni had

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ordered some of his men to take her from his presence, before she would retire.

In an agony of disappointment, she returned to Emily, who foreboded little good towards herself, from this refusal to Annette, and who, soon after, received a summons to repair to the great court, where the mules, with her guides, were in waiting. Emily here tried in vain to soothe the weeping Annette, who persisted in saying, that she should never see her dear young lady again; a fear, which her mistress secretly thought too well justified, but which she endeavoured to restrain, while, with apparent composure, she bade this affectionate servant farewel. Annette, however, followed to the courts, which were now thronged with people, busy in preparation for the enemy; and, having seen her mount her mule, and depart with her attendants, through the portal, turned into the castle and wept again.

Emily, meanwhile, as she looked back upon the gloomy courts of the castle, no

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longer silent as when she had first entered them, but resounding with the noise of preparation for their defence, as well as crowded with soldiers and workmen, hurrying to and fro; and, when she passed once more under the huge portcullis, which had formerly struck her with terror and dismay; and, looking round, saw no walls to confine her steps—felt, in spite of anticipation, the sudden joy of a prisoner, who unexpectedly finds himself at liberty. This emotion would not suffer her now to look impartially on the dangers that awaited her without; on mountains, infested by hostile parties, who seized every opportunity for plunder; and on a journey commenced under the guidance of men, whose countenances certainly did not speak favourably of their dispositions. In the present moments, she could only rejoice, that she was liberated from those walls, which she had entered with such dismal forbodings; and, remembering the superstitious presentiment which had then seized her,

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she could now smile at the impression it had made upon her mind.

As she gazed, with these emotions, upon the turrets of the castle, rising high over the woods, among which she wound, the stranger, whom she believed to be confined there, returned to her remembrance, and anxiety and apprehension, lest he should be Valancourt, again passed like a cloud upon her joy. She recollected every circumstance concerning this unknown person, since the night when she had first heard him play the song of her native province;—circumstances which she had so often recollected, and compared before, without extracting from them any thing like conviction, and which still only prompted her to believe that Valancourt was a prisoner at Udolpho. It was possible, however, that the men who were her conductors, might afford her information on this subject; but, fearing to question them immediately, lest they should be unwilling to discover any circumstance

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to her in the presence of each other, she watched for an opportunity of speaking with them separately.

Soon after, a trumpet echoed faintly from a distance; the guides stopped, and looked toward the quarter whence it came, but the thick woods, which surrounded them, excluding all view of the country beyond, one of the men rode on to the point of an eminence, that afforded a more extensive prospect, to observe how near the enemy, whose trumpet he guessed this to be, were advanced; the other, meanwhile, remained with Emily, and to him she put some questions concerning the stranger at Udolpho. Ugo, for this was his name, said, that there were several prisoners in the castle, but he neither recollected their persons, or the precise time of their arrival, and could therefore give her no information. There was a surliness in his manner, as he spoke, that made it probable he would not have satis-

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fied her enquiries, even if he could have done so.

Having asked him what prisoners had been taken, about the time, as nearly as she could remember, when she had first heard the music, "All that week," said Ugo, "I was out with a party upon the mountains, and knew nothing of what was doing at the castle. We had enough upon our hands, we had warm work of it."

Bertrand, the other man, being now returned, Emily enquired no further, and, when he had related to his companion what he had seen, they travelled on in deep silence; while Emily often caught, between the opening woods, partial glimpses of the castle above—the west towers, whose battlements were now crowded with archers, and the ramparts below, where soldiers were seen hurrying along, or busy upon the walls, preparing the cannon.

Having emerged from the woods, they wound along the valley in an opposite di-

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rection to that from whence the enemy were approaching. Emily had now a full view of Udolpho, with its grey walls, towers and terraces, high over-topping the precipices and the dark woods, and glittering partially with the arms of the *Condottieri*, as the sun's rays, streaming through an autumnal cloud, glanced upon a part of the edifice, whose remaining features stood in darkened majesty. She continued to gaze, through her tears, upon walls that, perhaps, confined Valancourt, and which now, as the cloud floated away, were lighted up with sudden splendor, and then, as suddenly were shrouded in gloom; while the passing gleam fell on the wood-tops below, and heightened the first tints of autumn, that had begun to steal upon the foliage. The winding mountains, at length, shut Udolpho from her view, and she turned, with mournful reluctance, to other objects. The melancholy sighing of the wind among the pines, that waved high over the steeps, and the dis-

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tant thunder of a torrent assisted her musings, and conspired, with the wild scenery around, to diffuse over her mind emotions solemn, yet not unpleasing, but which were soon interrupted by the distant roar of cannon, echoing among the mountains. The sounds rolled along the wind, and were repeated in faint and fainter reverberation, till they sunk in sullen murmurs. This was a signal, that the enemy had reached the castle, and fear for Valancourt again tormented Emily. She turned her anxious eye towards that part of the country, where the edifice stood, but the intervening heights concealed it from her view; still, however, she saw the tall head of a mountain, which immediately fronted her late chamber, and on this she fixed her gaze, as if it could have told her of all that was passing in the scene it overlooked. The guides twice reminded her that she was losing time, and that they had far to go, before she could turn from this interesting object, and, even when she

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again moved onward, she often sent a look back, till only its blue point, brightening in a gleam of sunshine, appeared peeping over other mountains.

The sound of the cannon affected Ugo, as the blast of the trumpet does the war-horse; it called forth all the fire of his nature; he was impatient to be in the midst of the fight, and uttered frequent execrations against Montoni for having sent him to a distance. The feelings of his comrade seemed to be very opposite, and adapted rather to the cruelties than to the dangers of war.

Emily asked frequent questions, concerning the place of her destination, but could only learn, that she was going to a cottage in Tuscany; and, whenever she mentioned the subject, she fancied she perceived, in the countenances of these men, an expression of malice and cunning that alarmed her.

It was afternoon, when they had left the castle. During several hours, they travel-

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led through regions of profound solitude, where no bleat of sheep, or bark of watch-dog, broke on silence, and they were now too far off to hear even the faint thunder of the cannon. Towards evening, they wound down precipices, black with forests of cypress, pine, and cedar, into a glen so savage and secluded, that, if Solitude ever had local habitation, this might have been "her place of dearest residence." To Emily it appeared a spot exactly suited for the retreat of banditti, and, in her imagination, she already saw them lurking under the brow of some projecting rock, whence their shadows, lengthened by the setting sun, stretched across the road, and warned the traveller of his danger. She shuddered at the idea, and, looking at her conductors, to observe whether they were armed, thought she saw in them the banditti she dreaded!

It was in this glen that they proposed to alight, "For," said Ugo, "night will come on presently, and then the wolves

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will make it dangerous to stop." This was a new subject of alarm to Emily, but inferior to what she suffered from the thought of being left in these wilds, at midnight, with two such men as her present conductors. Dark and dreadful hints of what might be Montoni's purpose in sending her hither, came to her mind. She endeavoured to dissuade the men from stopping, and enquired, with anxiety, how far they had yet to go.

"Many leagues yet," replied Bertrand. "As for you, Signora, you may do as you please about eating, but for us, we will make a hearty supper, while we can. We shall have need of it, I warrant, before we finish our journey. The sun's going down apace; let us alight under that rock, yonder."

His comrade assented, and turning the mules out of the road, they advanced towards a cliff, overhung with cedars, Emily following in trembling silence. They lifted her from her mule, and, having

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seated themselves on the grass, at the foot of the rocks, drew some homely fare from a wallet, of which Emily tried to eat a little, the better to disguise her apprehensions.

The sun was now sunk behind the high mountains in the west, upon which a purple haze began to spread, and the gloom of twilight to draw over the surrounding objects. To the low and sullen murmur of the breeze, passing among the woods, she no longer listened with any degree of pleasure, for it conspired with the wildness of the scene and the evening hour, to depress her spirits.

Suspense had so much increased her anxiety, as to the prisoner at Udolpho, that finding it impracticable to speak alone with Bertrand, on that subject, she renewed her questions in the presence of Ugo; but he either was, or pretended to be, entirely ignorant, concerning the stranger. When he had dismissed the question, he talked with Ugo on some subject, which

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led to the mention of Signor Orsino and of the affair that had banished him from Venice; respecting which Emily had ventured to ask a few questions. Ugo appeared to be well acquainted with the circumstances of that tragical event, and related some minute particulars, that both shocked and surprised her; for it appeared very extraordinary how such particulars could be known to any, but to persons present when the assassination was committed.

"He was of rank," said Bertrand, "or the State would not have troubled itself to enquire after his assassins. The Signor has been lucky hitherto; this is not the first affair of the kind he has had upon his hands; and to be sure, when a gentleman has no other way of getting redress—why he must take this."

"Aye," said Ugo, "and why is not this as good as another? This is the way to have justice done at once, without more ado. If you go to law, you must stay till

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the judges please, and may loose your cause at last. Why the best way, then, is to make sure of your right while you can, and execute justice yourself."

"Yes, yes," rejoined Bertrand, "if you wait till justice is done you — you may stay long enough. Why if I want a friend of mine properly served, how am I to get my revenge? Ten to one they will tell me he is in the right, and I am in the wrong. Or, if a fellow has got possession of property, which I think ought to be mine, why I may wait till I starve, perhaps, before the law will give it me, and then, after all, the judge may say — the estate is his. What is to be done then? — Why the case is plain enough, I must take it at last."

Emily's horror at this conversation was heightened by a suspicion, that the latter part of it was pointed against herself, and that these men had been commissioned by Montoni to execute a similar kind of *justice*, in his cause.

"But I was speaking of Signor Orsino,"

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resumed Bertrand, "he is one of those who love to do justice at once. I remember, about ten years ago, the Signor had a quarrel with a cavaliero of Milan. The story was told me then, and it is still fresh in my head. They quarrelled about a lady that the Signor liked, and she was perverse enough to prefer the gentleman of Milan, and even carried her whim so far as to marry him. This provoked the Signor, as well it might, for he had tried to talk reason to her a long while, and used to send people to serenade her, under her windows, of a night; and used to make verses about her, and would swear she was the handsomest lady in Milan—But all would not do—nothing would bring her to reason; and, as I said, she went so far at last, as to marry this other cavaliero. This made the Signor wroth, with a vengeance; he resolved to be even with her though, and he watched his opportunity, and did not wait long, for soon after the marriage, they set out for Padua, nothing

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doubting, I warrant, of what was preparing for them. The cavaliero thought, to be sure, he was to be called to no account, but was to go off triumphant; but he was soon made to know another sort of story."

"What, then the lady had promised to have Signor Orsino?" said Ugo.

"Promised! No," replied Bertrand, "she had not wit enough even to tell him she liked him, as I heard, but the contrary, for she used to say, from the first, she never meant to have him. And this was what provoked the Signor so, and with good reason, for who likes to be told that he is disagreeable? and this was saying as good. It was enough to tell him this; she need not have gone, and married another."

"What, she married, then, on purpose to plague the Signor?" said Ugo.

"I don't know as for that," replied Bertrand; "they said, indeed, that she had had a regard for the other gentleman a great while; but that is nothing to the purpose, she should not have married him, and then

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the Signor would not have been so much provoked. She might have expected what was to follow; it was not to be supposed he would bear her ill usage tamely, and she might thank herself for what happened. But, as I said, they set out for Padua, she and her husband, and the road lay over some barren mountains like these. This suited the Signor's purpose well. He watched the time of their departure, and sent his men after them, with directions what to do. They kept their distance, till they saw their opportunity, and this did not happen, till the second day's journey, when, the gentleman having sent his servants forward to the next town, may-be, to have horses in readiness, the Signor's men quickened their pace, and overtook the carriage, in a hollow, between two mountains, where the woods prevented the servants from seeing what passed, though they were then not far off. When we came up, we fired our tromboni, but missed."

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Emily turned pale at these words, and then hoped she had mistaken them; while Bertrand proceeded:

"The gentleman fired again, but he was soon made to alight, and it was as he turned to call his people, that he was struck. It was the most dexterous feat you ever saw—he was struck in the back with three stilettos at once. He fell, and was dispatched in a minute; but the lady escaped, for the servants had heard the firing, and came up before she could be taken care of. 'Bertrand,' said the Signor, when his men returned——"

"Bertrand!" exclaimed Emily, pale with horror, on whom not a syllable of this narrative had been lost.

"Bertrand, did I say?" rejoined the man, with some confusion—"No, Giovanni. But I have forgot where I was;—'Bertrand,' said the Signor——"

"Bertrand again!" said Emily, in a faltering voice, "Why do you repeat that name?"

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Bertrand swore. "What signifies it," he proceeded, "what the man was called —Bertrand, or Giovanni—or Roberto; it's all one for that. You have put me out twice with that—question. 'Bertrand,' or Giovanni—or what you will—'Bertrand,' said the Signor, 'if your comrades had done their duty, as well as you, I should not have lost the lady. Go, my honest fellow, and be happy with this.' He gave him a purse of gold—and little enough too, considering the service he had done him."

"Aye, aye," said Ugo, "little enough —little enough."

Emily now breathed with difficulty, and could scarcely support herself. When first she saw these men, their appearance and their connection with Montoni had been sufficient to impress her with distrust; but now, when one of them had betrayed himself to be a murderer, and she saw herself at the approach of night, under his guidance, among wild and solitary moun-

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tains, and going she scarcely knew whither, the most agonizing terror seized her, which was the less supportable from the necessity she found herself under of concealing all symptoms of it from her companions. Reflecting on the character and the menaces of Montoni, it appeared not improbable that he had delivered her to them, for the purpose of having her murdered, and of thus securing to himself, without further opposition or delay, the estates for which he had so long and so desperately contended. Yet, if this was his design, there appeared no necessity for sending her to such a distance from the castle; for, if any dread of discovery had made him unwilling to perpetrate the deed there, a much nearer place might have sufficed for the purpose of concealment. These considerations, however, did not immediately occur to Emily, with whom so many circumstances conspired to rouse terror, that she had no power to oppose it, or to enquire coolly into its grounds; and,

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if she had done so, still there were many appearances which would too well have justified her most terrible apprehensions. She did not now dare to speak to her conductors, at the sound of whose voices she trembled; and when, now and then, she stole a glance at them, their countenances, seen imperfectly through the gloom of evening, served to confirm her fears.

The sun had now been set some time; heavy clouds, whose lower skirts were tinged with sulphureous crimson, lingered in the west, and threw a reddish tint upon the pine forests, which sent forth a solemn sound, as the breeze rolled over them. The hollow moan struck upon Emily's heart, and served to render more gloomy and terrific every object around her,—the mountains, shaded in twilight—the gleaming torrent, hoarsely roaring—the black forests, and the deep glen, broken into rocky recesses, high overshadowed by cypress and sycamore, and winding into long obscurity. To this glen, Emily, as

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she sent forth her anxious eye, thought there was no end; no hamlet, or even cottage, was seen, and still no distant bark of watch-dog, or even faint, far-off halloo came on the wind. In a tremulous voice, she now ventured to remind the guides, that it was growing late, and to ask again how far they had to go: but they were too much occupied by their own discourse to attend to her question, which she forbore to repeat, lest it should provoke a surly answer. Having, however, soon after, finished their supper, the men collected the fragments into their wallet, and proceeded along this winding glen, in gloomy silence; while Emily again mused upon her own situation, and concerning the motives of Montoni for involving her in it. That it was for some evil purpose towards herself, she could not doubt; and it seemed, that, if he did not intend to destroy her, with a view of immediately seizing her estates, he meant to reserve her awhile in concealment, for some more terrible de-

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sign, for one that might equally gratify his avarice and still more his deep revenge. At this moment, remembering Signor Brochio and his behaviour in the corridor, a few preceding nights, the latter supposition, horrible as it was, strengthened in her belief. Yet, why remove her from the castle, where deeds of darkness had, she feared, been often executed with secrecy?—from chambers, perhaps

"With many a foul and midnight murder stain'd."

The dread of what she might be going to encounter was now so excessive, that it sometimes threatened her senses; and often as she went, she thought of her late father and of all he would have suffered, could he have foreseen the strange and dreadful events of her future life; and how anxiously he would have avoided that fatal confidence, which committed his daughter to the care of a woman so weak as was Madame Montoni. So romantic

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and improbable, indeed, did her present situation appear to Emily herself, particularly when she compared it with the repose and beauty of her early days, that there were moments when she could almost have believed herself the victim of frightful visions, glaring upon a disordered fancy.

Restrained by the presence of her guides from expressing her terrors, their acuteness was, at length, lost in gloomy despair. The dreadful view of what might await her hereafter rendered her almost indifferent to the surrounding dangers. She now looked, with little emotion, on the wild dingles, and the gloomy road and mountains, whose outlines only were distinguishable through the dusk;—objects, which but lately had effected her spirits so much, as to awaken horrid views of the future, and to tinge these with their own gloom.

It was now so nearly dark, that the travellers, who proceeded only by the slowest pace, could scarcely discern their way. The clouds, which seemed charged with

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thunder, passed slowly along the heavens, showing, at intervals, the trembling stars; while the groves of cypress and sycamore, that overhung the rocks, waved high in the breeze as it swept over the glen, and then rushed among the distant woods. Emily shivered as it passed.

"Where is the torch?" said Ugo, "it grows dark."

"Not so dark yet," replied Bertrand, "but we may find our way, and 'tis best not light the torch before we can help, for it may betray us, if any straggling party of the enemy is abroad."

Ugo muttered something which Emily did not understand, and they proceeded in darkness, while she almost wished that the enemy might discover them; for from change there was something to hope, since she could scarcely imagine any situation more dreadful than her present one.

As they moved slowly along, her attention was surprised by a thin tapering flame, that appeared, by fits, at the point of the

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pike, which Bertrand carried, resembling what she had observed on the lance of the sentinel the night Madame Montoni died, and which he had said was an omen. The event immediately following, it appeared to justify the assertion, and a superstitious impression had remained on Emily's mind, which the present appearance confirmed. She thought it was an omen of her own fate, and watched it successively vanish and return, in gloomy silence, which was at length interrupted by Bertrand.

"Let us light the torch," said he, "and get under shelter of the woods;—a storm is coming on—look at my lance."

He held it forth, with the flame tapering at its point*.

"Aye," said Ugo, "you are not one of those that believe in omens: we have left cowards at the castle, who would turn pale at such a sight. I have often seen it before a thunder storm, it is an omen of that, and

* See the Abbé Berthelon on Electricity.

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one is coming now, sure enough. The clouds flash fast already."

Emily was relieved by this conversation from some of the terrors of superstition; but those of reason increased, as, waiting while Ugo searched for a flint to strike fire, she watched the pale lightning gleam over the woods they were about to enter, and illumine the harsh countenances of her companions. Ugo could not find a flint, and Bertrand became impatient, for the thunder sounded hollowly at a distance, and the lightning was more frequent. Sometimes, it revealed the nearer recesses of the woods, or, displaying some opening in their summits, illumined the ground beneath with partial splendour, the thick foliage of the trees preserving the surrounding scene in deep shadow.

At length, Ugo found a flint, and the torch was lighted. The men then dismounted, and, having assisted Emily, led the mules towards the woods, that skirted the glen, on the left, over broken ground,

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frequently interrupted with brush-wood and wild plants, which she was often obliged to make a circuit to avoid.

She could not approach these woods, without experiencing keener sense of her danger. Their deep silence, except when the wind swept among their branches, and impenetrable glooms shewn partially by the sudden flash, and then, by the red glare of the torch, which served only to make "darkness visible," were circumstances that contributed to renew all her most terrible apprehensions; she thought, too, that, at this moment, the countenances of her conductors displayed more than their usual fierceness, mingled with a kind of lurking exultation, which they seemed endeavouring to disguise. To her affrighted fancy it occurred, that they were leading her into these woods to complete the will of Montoni by her murder. The horrid suggestion called a groan from her heart, which surprised her companions, who turned round quickly towards her,

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and she demanded why they led her thither, beseeching them to continue their way along the open glen, which she represented to be less dangerous than the woods in a thunder-storm.

"No, no," said Bertrand, "we know best where the danger lies. See how the clouds open over our heads. Besides, we can glide under cover of the woods with less hazard of being seen, should any of the enemy be wandering this way. By holy St. Peter and all the rest of them, I've as stout a heart as the best, as many a poor devil could tell, if he were alive again—but what can we do against numbers?"

"What are you whining about?" said Ugo, contemptuously, "who fears numbers! Let them come, though they were as many as the Signor's castle could hold; I would shew the knaves what fighting is. For you—— I would lay you quietly in a dry ditch, where you might peep out, and see me put the rogues to flight.—Who talks of fear!"

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Bertrand replied, with an horrible oath, that he did not like such jesting, and a violent altercation ensued, which was, at length, silenced by the thunder, whose deep volley was heard afar, rolling onward till it burst over their heads in sounds, that seemed to shake the earth to its centre. The ruffians paused, and looked upon each other. Between the boles of the trees, the blue lightning flashed and quivered along the ground, while, as Emily looked under the boughs, the mountains beyond frequently appeared to be clothed in livid flame. At this moment, perhaps, she felt less fear of the storm, than did either of her companions, for other terrors occupied her mind.

The men now rested under an enormous chesnut-tree, and fixed their pikes in the ground at some distance, on the iron points of which Emily repeatedly observed the lightning play, and then glide down them into the earth.

"I would we were well in the Signor's

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castle!" said Bertrand, "I know not why he should send us on this business. Hark! how it rattles above, there! I could almost find in my heart to turn priest, and pray. Ugo hast got a rosary?"

"No," replied Ugo, "I leave it to cowards like thee, to carry rosaries—I carry a sword."

"And much good may it do thee in fighting against the storm!" said Bertrand.

Another peal, which was reverberated in tremendous echoes among the mountains, silenced them for a moment. As it rolled away, Ugo proposed going on. "We are only losing time here," said he, "for the thick boughs of the woods will shelter us as well as this chesnut-tree."

They again led the mules forward, between the boles of the trees, and over pathless grass, that concealed their high knotted roots. The rising wind was now heard contending with the thunder, as it rushed furiously among the branches above, and brightened the red flame of the torch,

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which threw a stronger light forward among the woods, and shewed their gloomy recesses to be suitable resorts for the wolves, of which Ugo had formerly spoken.

At length, the strength of the wind seemed to drive the storm before it, for the thunder rolled away into distance, and was only faintly heard. After travelling through the woods for nearly an hour, during which the elements seemed to have returned to repose, the travellers, gradually ascending from the glen, found themselves upon the open brow of a mountain, with a wide valley, extending in misty moonlight at their feet, and above, the blue sky trembling through the few thin clouds that lingered after the storm, and were sinking slowly to the verge of the horizon.

Emily's spirits, now that she had quitted the woods, began to revive; for she considered, that if these men had received an order to destroy her, they would probably have executed their barbarous purpose in the solitary wild, from whence they had just

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emerged, where the deed would have been shrouded from every human eye. Reassured by this reflection, and by the quiet demeanour of her guides, Emily, as they proceeded silently, in a kind of sheep track, that wound along the skirts of the woods, which ascended on the right, could not survey the sleeping beauty of the vale, to which they were declining, without a momentary sensation of pleasure. It seemed varied with woods, pastures, and sloping grounds, and was screened to the north and the east by an amphitheatre of the Apennines, whose outline on the horizon was here broken into varied and elegant forms; to the west and the south, the landscape extended indistinctly into the low lands of Tuscany.

"There is the sea yonder," said Bertrand, as if he had known that Emily was examining the twilight view, "yonder in the west, though we cannot see it."

Emily already perceived a change in the climate, from that of the wild and moun-

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tanous tract she had left; and as she continued descending, the air became perfumed by the breath of a thousand nameless flowers among the grass, called forth by the late rain. So soothingly beautiful was the scene around her, and so strikingly contrasted to the gloomy grandeur of those to which she had long been confined, and to the manners of the people, who moved among them, that she could almost have fancied herself again at La Vallée, and, wondering why Montoni had sent her hither, could scarcely believe that he had selected so enchanting a spot for any cruel design. It was, however, probably not the spot, but the persons, who happened to inhabit it, and to whose care he could safely commit the execution of his plans, whatever they might be, that had determined his choice.

She now ventured again to enquire, whether they were near the place of their destination, and was answered by Ugo, that they had not far to go. "Only to the

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wood of chesnuts in the valley yonder," said he, "there, by the brook, that sparkles with the moon; I wish I was once at rest there, with a flask of good wine, and a slice of Tuscany bacon."

Emily's spirits revived, when she heard that the journey was so nearly concluded, and saw the wood of chesnuts in an open part of the vale, on the margin of the stream.

In a short time they reached the entrance of the wood, and perceived, between the twinkling leaves, a light streaming from a distant cottage-window. They proceeded along the edge of the brook to where the trees, crowding over it, excluded the moon-beams; but a long line of light, from the cottage above, was seen on its dark tremulous surface. Bertrand now stepped on first, and Emily heard him knock, and call loudly at the door. As she reached it, the small upper casement, where the light appeared, was unclosed by a man, who, having enquired what they wanted, imme-

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diately descended, let them into a neat rustic cot, and called up his wife to set refreshments before the travellers. As this man conversed, rather apart, with Bertrand, Emily anxiously surveyed him. He was a tall, but not a robust peasant, of a sallow complexion, and had a shrewd and cunning eye; his countenance was not of a character to win the ready confidence of youth, and there was nothing in his manner that might conciliate a stranger.

Ugo called impatiently for supper, and in a tone as if he knew his authority here to be unquestionable. "I expected you an hour ago," said the peasant, "for I have had Signor Montoni's letter these three hours, and I and my wife had given you up, and gone to bed. How did you fare in the storm?"

"Ill enough," replied Ugo, "ill enough, and we are like to fare ill enough here, too, unless you will make more haste. Get us more wine, and let us see what you have to eat."

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The peasant placed before them all that his cottage afforded — ham, wine, figs, and grapes of such size and flavour, as Emily had seldom tasted.

After taking refreshment, she was shewn by the peasant's wife to her little bed-chamber, where she asked some questions concerning Montoni, to which the woman, whose name was Dorina, gave reserved answers, pretending ignorance of his *Excellenza*'s intention in sending Emily hither, but acknowledging that her husband had been apprized of the circumstance. Perceiving that she could obtain no intelligence concerning her destination, Emily dismissed Dorina, and retired to repose; but all the busy scenes of the past and the anticipated ones of the future came to her anxious mind, and conspired with the sense of her new situation to banish sleep.

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CHAP. VII.

"Was nought around but images of rest,
Sleep-soothing groves and quiet lawns between,
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest,
From poppies breath'd, and banks of pleasant green,
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime unnumbered glittering streamlets play'd,
And hurled every-where their water's sheen,
That, as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made."

THOMSON.

WHEN Emily, in the morning, opened her casement, she was surprised to observe the beauties that surrounded it. The cottage was nearly embowered in the woods, which were chiefly of chesnut, intermixed with some cypress, larch, and sycamore. Beneath the dark and spreading branches, appeared to the north and to the east the woody Apennines, rising in majestic amphitheatre, not black with pines, as she had been accustomed to see them, but their

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loftiest summits crowned with ancient forests of chesnut, oak, and oriental plane, now animated with the rich tints of autumn, and which swept downward to the valley uninterruptedly, except where some bold rocky promontory looked out from among the foliage, and caught the passing gleam. Vineyards stretched along the feet of the mountains, where the elegant villas of the Tuscan nobility frequently adorned the scene, and overlooked slopes clothed with groves of olive, mulberry, orange, and lemon. The plain to which these declined, was coloured with the riches of cultivation, whose mingled hues were mellowed into harmony by an Italian sun. Vines, their purple clusters blushing between the russet foliage, hung in luxuriant festoons from the branches of standard fig and cherry trees, while pastures of verdure, such as Emily had seldom seen in Italy, enriched the banks of a stream that, after descending from the mountains, wound along the landscape, which it reflected, to a bay of the

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sea. There, far in the west, the waters, fading into the sky, assumed a tint of the faintest purple, and the line of separation between them was, now and then, discernible only by the progress of a sail, brightened with the sun-beam, along the horizon.

The cottage, which was shaded by the woods from the intenser rays of the sun, and was open only to his evening light, was covered entirely with vines, fig-trees, and jessamine, whose flowers surpassed in size and fragrance any that Emily had seen. These and ripening clusters of grapes hung round her little casement. The turf, that grew under the woods, was inlaid with a variety of wild flowers and perfumed herbs, and on the opposite margin of the stream, whose current diffused freshness beneath the shades, rose a grove of lemon and orange trees. This, though nearly opposite to Emily's window, did not interrupt her prospect, but rather heightened, by its dark verdure, the effect of the perspective; and to her this spot was a bower of

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sweets, whose charms communicated imperceptibly to her mind somewhat of their own serenity.

She was soon summoned to breakfast by the peasant's daughter, a girl about seventeen, of a pleasant countenance, which, Emily was glad to observe, seemed animated with the pure affections of nature, though the others, that surrounded her, expressed, more or less, the worst qualities —cruelty, ferocity, cunning, and duplicity; of the latter style of countenance, especially, were those of the peasant and his wife. Maddelina spoke little, but what she said was in a soft voice, and with an air of modesty and complacency that interested Emily, who breakfasted at a separate table with Dorina, while Ugo and Bertrand were taking a repast of Tuscany bacon and wine with their host, near the cottage door, when they had finished which, Ugo, rising hastily, enquired for his mule, and Emily learned that he was to return to Udolpho, while Bertrand remained at the

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cottage; a circumstance, which, though it did not surprise, distressed her.

When Ugo was departed, Emily proposed to walk in the neighbouring woods; but, on being told that she must not quit the cottage without having Bertrand for her attendant, she withdrew to her own room. There, as her eyes settled on the towering Appennines, she recollected the terrific scenery they had exhibited and the horrors she had suffered, on the preceding night, particularly at the moment when Bertrand had betrayed himself to be an assassin; and these remembrances awakened a train of images, which, since they abstracted her from a consideration of her own situation, she pursued for some time, and then arranged in the following lines; pleased to have discovered any innocent means by which she could beguile an hour of misfortune.

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THE PILGRIM*.

Slow o'er the Apennine, with bleeding feet,
A patient Pilgrim wound his lonely way,
To deck the lady of Loretto's seat
With all the little wealth his zeal could pay.
From mountain-tops cold died the evening ray,
And, stretch'd in twilight, slept the vale below;
And now the last, last purple streaks of day
Along the melancholy West fade slow.
High o'er his head the restless pines complain,
As on their summit rolls the breeze of night;
Beneath, the hoarse stream chides the rocks in vain:
The Pilgrim pauses on the dizzy height.
Then to the vale his cautious step he press'd,
For there a hermit's cross was dimly seen,
Cresting the rock, and there his limbs might rest,
Cheer'd in the good man's cave, by faggot's sheen,
On leafy beds, nor guile his sleep molest.
Unhappy Luke! he trusts a treacherous clue!
Behind the cliff the lurking robber stood;
No friendly moon his giant shadow threw
Athwart the road, to save the Pilgrim's blood;
On as he went a vesper hymn he sang,
The hymn, that nightly sooth'd him to repose.
Fierce on his harmless prey the ruffian sprang!
The Pilgrim bleeds to death, his eye-lids close.
Yet his meek spirit knew no vengeful care,
But, dying, for his murd'rer breath'd — a sainted pray'r!

* This poem, and that entitled The Traveller, in vol. ii. have already appeared in a periodical publication.

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Preferring the solitude of her room to the company of the persons below stairs, Emily dined above, and Maddelina was suffered to attend her, from whose simple conversation she learned, that the peasant and his wife were old inhabitants of this cottage, which had been purchased for them by Montoni, in reward of some service, rendered him, many years before, by Marco, to whom Carlo, the steward at the castle, was nearly related. "So many years ago, Signora," added Maddelina, "that I know nothing about it; but my father did the Signor a great good, for my mother has often said to him, this cottage was the least he ought to have had."

To the mention of this circumstance Emily listened with a painful interest, since it appeared to give a frightful colour to the character of Marco, whose service, thus rewarded by Montoni, she could scarcely doubt had been criminal; and, if so, had too much reason to believe, that she had been committed into his hands for some desperate purpose. "Did you ever hear

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how many years it is," said Emily, who was considering of Signora Laurentini's disappearance from Udolpho, "since your father performed the service you spoke of?"

"It was a little before he came to live at the cottage, Signora," replied Maddelina, "and that is about eighteen years ago."

This was near the period, when Signora Laurentini had been said to disappear, and it occurred to Emily that Marco had assisted in that mysterious affair, and, perhaps, had been employed in a murder! This horrible suggestion fixed her in such profound reverie, that Maddelina quitted the room, unperceived by her, and she remained unconscious of all around her for a considerable time. Tears, at length, came to her relief, after indulging which, her spirits becoming calmer, she ceased to tremble at a view of evils that might never arrive; and had sufficient resolution to endeavour to withdraw her thoughts from the contemplation of her own interests. Remembering the few books

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which even in the hurry of her departure from Udolpho she had put into her little package, she sat down with one of them at her pleasant casement, whence her eyes often wandered from the page to the landscape, whose beauty gradually soothed her mind into gentle melancholy.

Here she remained alone till evening, and saw the sun descend the western sky, through all his pomp of light and shadow upon the mountains, and gleam upon the distant ocean and the stealing sails, as he sunk amidst the waves. Then, at the musing hour of twilight, her softened thoughts returned to Valancourt; she again recollected every circumstance connected with the midnight music, and all that might assist her conjecture concerning his imprisonment at the castle, and, becoming confirmed in the supposition, that it was his voice she had heard there, she looked back to that gloomy abode with emotions of grief and momentary regret.

Refreshed by the cool and fragrant air,

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and her spirits soothed to a state of gentle melancholy by the still murmur of the brook below and of the woods around, she lingered at her casement long after the sun had set, watching the valley sinking into obscurity, till only the grand outline of the surrounding mountains, shadowed upon the horizon, remained visible. But a clear moon-light, that succeeded, gave to the landscape what time gives to the scenes of past life, when it softens all their harsher features, and throws over the whole the mellowing shade of distant contemplation. The scenes of La Vallée, in the early morn of her life, when she was protected and beloved by parents equally loved, appeared in Emily's memory tenderly beautiful, like the prospect before her, and awakened mournful comparisons. Unwilling to encounter the coarse behaviour of the peasant's wife, she remained supperless in her room, while she wept again over her forlorn and perilous situation, a review of which entirely overcame the small re-

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mains of her fortitude, and, reducing her to temporary despondence, she wished to be released from this heavy load of life that had so long oppressed her, and prayed to Heaven to take her, in its mercy, to her parents.

Wearied with weeping, she, at length, lay down on her mattress, and sunk to sleep, but was soon awakened by a knocking at her chamber-door, and, starting up in terror, she heard a voice calling her. The image of Bertrand, with a stiletto in his hand, appeared to her alarmed fancy, and she neither opened the door, or answered, but listened in profound silence, till, the voice repeating her name in the same low tone, she demanded who called. "It is I, Signora," replied the voice, which she now distinguished to be Maddelina's, "pray open the door.—Don't be frightened, it is I."

"And what brings you here so late, Maddelina?" said Emily, as she let her in. "Hush! Signora, for heaven's sake hush!

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—if we are overheard I shall never be forgiven. My father and mother and Bertrand are all gone to bed," continued Maddelina, as she gently shut the door, and crept forward, "and I have brought you some supper, for you had none, you know, Signora, below stairs. Here are some grapes and figs and half a cup of wine." Emily thanked her, but expressed apprehension lest this kindness should draw upon her the resentment of Dorina, when she perceived the fruit was gone. "Take it back, therefore, Maddelina," added Emily, "I shall suffer much less from the want of it, than I should do, if this act of goodnature was to subject you to your mother's displeasure."

"O Signora! there is no danger of that," replied Maddelina, "my mother cannot miss the fruit, for I saved it from my own supper. You will make me very unhappy, if you refuse to take it, Signora." Emily was so much affected by this instance of the good girl's generosity, that

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she remained for some time unable to reply, and Maddelina watched her in silence, till, mistaking the cause of her emotion, she said, "Do not weep so, Signora! My mother, to be sure, is a little cross, sometimes, but then it is soon over,—so don't take it so much to heart. She often scolds me, too; but then I have learned to bear it; and, when she has done, if I can but steal out into the woods, and play upon my sticcado, I forget it all directly."

Emily, smiling through her tears, told Maddelina, that she was a good girl, and then accepted her offering. She wished anxiously to know whether Bertrand and Dorina had spoken of Montoni, or of his designs, concerning herself, in the presence of Maddelina, but disdained to tempt the innocent girl to a conduct so mean, as that of betraying the private conversation of her parents. When she was departing, Emily requested that she would come to her room as often as she dared without offending her mother; and Maddelina, after pro-

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mising that she would do so, stole softly back again to her own chamber.

Thus several days passed, during which Emily remained in her own room, Maddelina attending her only at her repast, whose gentle countenance and manners soothed her more than any circumstance she had known for many months. Of her pleasant embbwered chamber she now became fond, and began to experience in it those feelings of security, which we naturally attach to home. In this interval also, her mind, having been undisturbed by any new circumstance of disgust, or alarm, recovered its tone sufficiently to permit her the enjoyment of her books, among which she found some unfinished sketches of landscapes, several blank sheets of paper, with her drawing instruments, and she was thus enabled to amuse herself with selecting some of the lovely features of the prospect that her window commanded, and combining them in scenes, to which her tasteful fancy gave a last grace. In these little

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sketches she generally placed interesting groups, characteristic of the scenery they animated, and often contrived to tell, with perspicuity, some simple and affecting story, when, as a tear fell over the pictured griefs which her imagination drew, she would forget, for a moment, her real sufferings. Thus innocently she beguiled the heavy hours of misfortune, and, with meek patience, awaited the events of futurity.

A beautiful evening, that had succeeded to a sultry day, at length induced Emily to walk, though she knew that Bertrand must attend her, and, with Maddelina for her companion, she left the cottage, followed by Bertrand, who allowed her to choose her own way. The hour was cool and silent, and she could not look upon the country around her without delight. How lovely, too, appeared the brilliant blue that coloured all the upper region of the air, and, thence fading downward, was lost in the saffron glow of the horizon!

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Nor less so were the varied shades and warm colouring of the Apennines, as the evening sun threw his flaming rays athwart their broken surface. Emily followed the course of the stream, under the shades, that overhung its grassy margin. On the opposite banks, the pastures were animated with herds of cattle of a beautiful cream-colour; and, beyond, were groves of lemon and orange, with fruit glowing on the branches, frequent almost as the leaves, which partly concealed it. She pursued her way towards the sea, which reflected the warm glow of sun-set, while the cliffs, that rose over its edge, were tinted with the last rays. The valley was terminated on the right by a lofty promontory, whose summit, impending over the waves, was crowned with a ruined tower, now serving for the purpose of a beacon, whose shattered battlements and the extended wings of some sea-fowl that circled near it, were still illumined by the upward beams of the sun, though his disk was now sunk beneath

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the horizon; while the lower part of the ruin, the cliff on which it stood, and the waves at its foot, were shaded with the first tints of twilight.

Having reached this headland, Emily gazed with solemn pleasure on the cliffs that extended on either hand along the sequestered shores, some crowned with groves of pine, and others exhibiting only barren precipices of a greyish marble, except where the crags were tufted with myrtle and other aromatic shrubs. The sea slept in a perfect calm; its waves, dying in murmurs on the shores, flowed with the gentlest undulation, while its clear surface reflected in softened beauty the vermeil tints of the west. Emily, as she looked upon the ocean, thought of France and of past times, and she wished, oh! how ardently, and vainly—wished! that its waves would bear her to her distant native home!

"Ah! that vessel," said she, "that vessel, which glides along so stately, with

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its tall sails reflected in the water, is, perhaps, bound for France! Happy—happy bark!" She continued to gaze upon it, with warm emotion, till the grey of twilight obscured the distance, and veiled it from her view. The melancholy sound of the waves at her feet assisted the tenderness that occasioned her tears, and this was the only sound that broke upon the hour, till, having followed the windings of the beach for some time, a chorus of voices passed her on the air. She paused a moment, wishing to hear more, yet fearing to be seen, and, for the first time, looked back to Bertrand, as her protector, who was following, at a short distance, in company with some other person. Re-assured by this circumstance, she advanced towards the sounds, which seemed to arise from behind a high promontory, that projected athwart the beach. There was now a sudden pause in the music, and then one female voice was heard to sing in a kind of chant. Emily quickened her

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steps, and winding round the rock, saw, within the sweeping bay, beyond, which was hung with woods from the borders of the beach to the very summit of the cliffs, two groups of peasants, one seated beneath the shades, and the other standing on the edge of the sea, round the girl who was singing, and who held in her hand a chaplet of flowers, which she seemed about to drop into the waves.

Emily, listening with surprise and attention, distinguished the following invocation, delivered in the pure and elegant tongue of Tuscany, and accompanied by a few pastoral instruments.

TO A SEA-NYMPH.

O nymph! who lov'st to float on the green wave,
When Neptune sleeps beneath the moon-light hour,
Lull'd by the music's melancholy pow'r,
O nymph, arise from out thy pearly cave!

For Hesper beams amid the twilight shade,
And soon shall Cynthia tremble o'er the tide,
Gleam on these cliffs, that bound the ocean's pride,
And lonely silence all the air pervade.

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Then, let thy tender voices at distance swell,
And steal along this solitary shore,
Sink on the breeze, till dying—heard no more—
Thou wak'st the sudden magic of thy shell.

While the long coast in echo sweet replies,
Thy soothing strains the pensive heart beguile,
And bid the visions of the future smile,
O nymph! from out thy pearly cave—arise!

(Chorus) *Arise!*
(Semi-chorus) *Arise!*

The last words being repeated by the surrounding group, the garland of flowers was thrown into the waves, and the chorus, sinking gradually into a chant, died away in silence.

"What can this mean, Maddelina?" said Emily, awakening from the pleasing trance into which the music had lulled her. "This is the eve of a festival, Signora," replied Maddelina; "and the peasants then amuse themselves with all kinds of sports."

"But they talked of a sea-nymph," said Emily: "how came these good people to think of a sea-nymph?"

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"O, Signora," rejoined Maddelina, mistaking the reason of Emily's surprise, "nobody *believes* in such things, but our old songs tell of them, and when we are at our sports, we sometimes sing to them, and throw garlands into the sea."

Emily had been early taught to venerate Florence as the seat of literature and of the fine arts; but, that its taste for classic story should descend to the peasants of the country, occasioned her both surprise and admiration. The Arcadian air of the girls next attracted her attention. Their dress was a very short full petticoat of light green, with a boddice of white silk; the sleeves loose, and tied up at the shoulders with ribbons and bunches of flowers. Their hair, falling in ringlets on their necks, was also ornamented with flowers, and with a small straw hat, which, set rather backward and on one side of the head, gave an expression of gaiety and smartness to the whole figure. When the song had concluded, several of these girls approached

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Emily, and, inviting her to sit down among them, offered her, and Maddelina, whom they knew, grapes and figs.

Emily accepted their courtesy, much pleased with the gentleness and grace of their manners, which appeared to be perfectly natural to them; and when Bertrand, soon after, approached, and was hastily drawing her away, a peasant, holding up a flask, invited him to drink; a temptation which Bertrand was seldom very valiant in resisting.

"Let the young lady join in the dance, my friend," said the peasant, "while we empty this flask. They are going to begin directly. Strike up! my lads, strike up your tambourines and merry flutes!"

They sounded gaily; and the younger peasants formed themselves into a circle, which Emily would readily have joined, had her spirits been in unison with their mirth. Maddelina, however, tripped it lightly, and Emily, as she looked on the happy group, lost the sense of her misfor-

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tunes in that of a benevolent pleasure. But the pensive melancholy of her mind returned, as she sat rather apart from the company, listening to the mellow music, which the breeze softened as it bore it away, and watching the moon stealing its tremulous light over the waves and on the woody summits of the cliffs, that wound along these Tuscan shores.

Meanwhile, Bertrand was so well pleased with his first flask, that he very willingly commenced the attack of a second, and it was late before Emily, not without some apprehension, returned to the cottage.

After this evening, she frequently walked with Maddelina, but was never unattended by Bertrand; and her mind became by degrees as tranquil as the circumstances of her situation would permit. The quiet, in which she was suffered to live, encouraged her to hope that she was not sent hither with an evil design; and, had it not appeared probable that Valancourt was at this time an inhabitant of Udolpho, she

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would have wished to remain at the cottage, till an opportunity should offer of returning to her native country. But, concerning Montoni's motive for sending her into Tuscany, she was more than ever perplexed, nor could she believe that any consideration for her safety had influenced him on this occasion.

She had been some time at the cottage, before she recollected, that, in the hurry of leaving Udolpho, she had forgotten the papers committed to her by her late aunt, relative to the Languedoc estates; but, though this remembrance occasioned her much uneasiness, she had some hope, that, in the obscure place where they were deposited, they would escape the detection of Montoni.

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CHAP. VIII.

"My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say.
I play the torturer, by small and small,
To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken."

RICHARD II.

WE now return, for a moment, to Venice, where Count Morano was suffering under an accumulation of misfortunes. Soon after his arrival in that city, he had been arrested by order of the Senate, and, without knowing of what he was suspected, was conveyed to a place of confinement, whither the most strenuous enquiries of his friends had been unable to trace him. Who the enemy was, that had occasioned him this calamity, he had not been able to guess, unless, indeed, it was Montoni, on whom his suspicions rested, and not only with much apparent probability, but with justice.

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In the affair of the poisoned cup, Montoni had suspected Morano; but, being unable to obtain the degree of proof which was necessary to convict him of a guilty intention, he had recourse to means of other revenge, than he could hope to obtain by prosecution. He employed a person, in whom he believed he might confide, to drop a letter of accusation into the *Denunzie secrete*, or lions' mouths, which are fixed in a gallery of the Doge's palace, as receptacles for anonymous information concerning persons who may be disaffected towards the State. As, on these occasions, the accuser is not confronted with the accused, a man may falsely impeach his enemy, and accomplish an unjust revenge, without fear of punishment or detection. That Montoni should have recourse to these diabolical means of ruining a person, whom he suspected of having attempted his life, is not in the least surprising. In the letter, which he had employed as the instrument of his revenge, he accused Morano of de-

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signs against the State, which he attempted to prove, with all the plausible simplicity of which he was master; and the Senate, with whom a suspicion was, at that time, almost equal to a proof, arrested the Count, in consequence of this accusation; and, without even hinting to him his crime, threw him into one of those secret prisons, which were the terror of the Venetians, and in which persons often languished, and sometimes died, without being discovered by their friends.

Morano had incurred the personal resentment of many members of the State; his habits of life had rendered him obnoxious to some; and his ambition, and the bold rivalship which he discovered on several public occasions,—to others; and it was not to be expected, that mercy would soften the rigor of a law, which was to be dispensed from the hands of his enemies.

Montoni, meantime, was beset by dangers of another kind. His castle was be-

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sieged by troops, who seemed willing to dare every thing, and to suffer patiently any hardships, in pursuit of victory. The strength of the fortress, however, withstood their attack, and this, with the vigorous defence of the garrison, and the scarcity of provision on these wild mountains, soon compelled the assailants to raise the siege.

When Udolpho was once more left to the quiet possession of Montoni, he dispatched Ugo into Tuscany for Emily, whom he had sent, from considerations of her personal safety, to a place of greater security than a castle, which was, at that time, liable to be overrun by his enemies. Tranquillity being once more restored to Udolpho, he was impatient to secure her again under his roof, and had commissioned Ugo to assist Bertrand in guarding her back to the castle. Thus compelled to return, Emily bade the kind Maddelina farewell, with regret, and, after about a fortnight's stay in Tuscany, where she had experienced an interval of quiet, which

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was absolutely necessary to sustain her long-harassed spirits, began once more to ascend the Apennines, from whose heights she gave a long and sorrowful look to the beautiful country that extended at their feet, and to the distant Mediterranean, whose waves she had so often wished would bear her back to France. The distress she felt, on her return towards the place of her former sufferings, was, however, softened by a conjecture, that Valancourt was there, and she found some degree of comfort in the thought of being near him, notwithstanding the consideration, that he was probably a prisoner.

It was noon, when she had left the cottage, and the evening was closed, long before she came within the neighbourhood of Udolpho. There was a moon, but it shone only at intervals, for the night was cloudy; and, lighted by the torch, which Ugo carried, the travellers paced silently along, Emily musing on her situation, and Bertrand and Ugo anticipating the com-

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forts of a flask of wine and a good fire, for they had perceived for some time the difference between the warm climate of the lowlands of Tuscany and the nipping air of these upper regions. Emily was, at length, roused from her reverie by the far-off sound of the castle-clock, to which she listened not without some degree of awe, as it rolled away on the breeze. Another and another note succeeded, and died in sullen murmur among the mountains:—to her mournful imagination it seemed a knell measuring out some fatal period for her.

"Aye, there is the old clock," said Bertrand, "there he is still; the cannons have not silenced him!"

"No," answered Ugo, "he crowed as loud as the best of them in the midst of it all. There he was roaring out in the hottest fire I have seen this many a day! I said that some of them would have a hit at the old fellow, but he escaped, and the tower too."

The road winding round the base of a

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mountain, they now came within view of the castle, which was shewn in the perspective of the valley by a gleam of moonshine, and then vanished in shade; while even a transient view of it had awakened the poignancy of Emily's feelings. Its massy and gloomy walls gave her terrible ideas of imprisonment and suffering: yet, as she advanced, some degree of hope mingled with her terror; for, though this was certainly the residence of Montoni, it was possibly, also, that of Valancourt, and she could not approach a place where he might be, without experiencing somewhat of the joy of hope.

They continued to wind along the valley, and, soon after, she saw again the old walls and moon-light towers rising over the woods: the strong rays enabled her, also, to perceive the ravages which the siege had made—with the broken walls, and shattered battlements; for they were now at the foot of the steep, on which Udolpho stood. Massy fragments had

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rolled down among the woods, through which the travellers now began to ascend, and there mingled with the loose earth and pieces of rock they had brought with them. The woods, too, had suffered much from the batteries above, for here the enemy had endeavoured to screen themselves from the fire of the ramparts. Many noble trees were levelled with the ground, and others, to a wide extent, were entirely stripped of their upper branches. "We had better dismount," said Ugo, "and lead the mules up the hill, or we shall get into some of the holes which the balls have left. Here are plenty of them. Give me the torch," continued Ugo, after they had dismounted, "and take care you don't stumble over any thing that lies in your way, for the ground is not yet cleared of the enemy."

"How!" exclaimed Emily, "are any of the enemy here, then?"

"Nay, I don't know for that, now," he

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replied, "but when I came away, I saw one or two of them lying under the trees."

As they proceeded, the torch threw a gloomy light upon the ground, and far among the recesses of the woods, and Emily feared to look forward, lest some object of horror should meet her eye. The path was often strewn with broken heads of arrows, and with shattered remains of armour, such as at that period was mingled with the lighter dress of the soldiers. "Bring the light hither," said Bertrand, "I have stumbled over something that rattles loud enough." Ugo holding up the torch, they perceived a steel breast-plate on the ground, which Bertrand raised, and they saw that it was pierced through, and that the lining was entirely covered with blood; but upon Emily's earnest entreaties that they would proceed, Bertrand, uttering some joke upon the unfortunate person to whom it had belonged, threw it hard upon the ground, and they passed on.

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At every step she took, Emily feared to see some vestige of death. Coming soon after to an opening in the woods, Bertrand stopped to survey the ground, which was encumbered with massy trunks and branches of the trees, that had so lately adorned it, and seemed to have been a spot particularly fatal to the besiegers; for it was evident, from the destruction of the trees, that here the hottest fire of the garrison had been directed. As Ugo held again forth the torch, steel glittered between the fallen trees, the ground beneath was covered with broken arms, and with the torn vestments of soldiers, whose mangled forms Emily almost expected to see; and she again entreated her companions to proceed, who were, however, too intent in their examination, to regard her, and she turned her eyes from this desolated scene to the castle above, where she observed lights gliding along the ramparts. Presently, the castle-clock struck twelve, and then a

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trumpet sounded, of which Emily enquired the occasion.

"O! they are only changing watch," replied Ugo. "I do not remember this trumpet," said Emily; "it is a new custom." "It is only an old one revived, lady; we always use it in time of war. We have sounded it, at midnight, ever since the place was besieged."

"Hark!" said Emily, as the trumpet sounded again; and in the next moment she heard a faint clash of arms, and then the watch-word passed along the terrace above, and was answered from a distant part of the castle; after which all was again still. She complained of cold, and begged to go on. "Presently, lady," said Bertrand, turning over some broken arms with the pike he usually carried. "What have we here?"

"Hark!" cried Emily, "what noise was that?"

"What noise was it?" said Ugo, starting up and listening.

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"Hush!" repeated Emily. "It surely came from the ramparts above;" and, on looking up, they perceived a light moving along the walls, while, in the next instant, the breeze swelling, the voice sounded louder than before.

"Who goes yonder?" cried a sentinel of the castle. "Speak, or it will be worse for you." Bertrand uttered a shout of joy. "Ha! my brave comrade, is it you?" said he, and he blew a shrill whistle, which signal was answered by another from the soldier on watch; and the party, then passing forward, soon after emerged from the woods upon the broken road that led immediately to the castle gates, and Emily saw, with renewed terror, the whole of that stupendous structure. "Alas!" said she to herself, "I am going again into my prison!"

"Here has been warm work, by St. Marco!" cried Bertrand, waving the torch over the ground; "the balls have torn up the earth here, with a vengeance."

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"Aye," replied Ugo, "they were fired from that redoubt, yonder, and rare execution they did. The enemy made a furious attack upon the great gates; but they might have guessed they could never carry it there; for, besides the cannon from the walls, our archers, on the two round towers, showered down upon them at such a rate, that, by holy Peter! there was no standing it. I never saw a better sight in my life; I laughed, till my sides ached, to see how the knaves scampered. Bertrand, my good fellow, thou shouldst have been among them; I warrant thou wouldst have won the race!"

"Hah! you are at your old tricks again," said Bertrand in a surly tone. "It is well for thee thou art so near the castle; thou knowst I have killed my man before now." Ugo replied only by a laugh, and then gave some further account of the siege, to which as Emily listened, she was struck by the strong contrast of the present scene

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with that which had so lately been acted here.

The mingled uproar of cannon, drums, and trumpets, the groans of the conquered, and the shouts of the conquerors, were now sunk into a silence so profound, that it seemed as if death had triumphed alike over the vanquished and the victor. The shattered condition of one of the towers of the great gates by no means confirmed the *valiant* account just given by Ugo of the scampering party, who, it was evident, had not only made a stand, but had done much mischief before they took to flight; for this tower appeared, as far as Emily could judge by the dim moon-light that fell upon it, to be laid open, and the battlements were nearly demolished. While she gazed, a light glimmered through one of the lower hoop-holes, and disappeared; but, in the next moment, she perceived through the broken wall a soldier, with a lamp, ascending the narrow staircase, that wound within the tower, and remembering that

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it was the same she had passed up, on the night when Barnardine had deluded her with a promise of seeing Madame Montoni, fancy gave her somewhat of the terror she had then suffered. She was now very near the gates, over which the soldier having opened the door of the portal-chamber, the lamp he carried gave her a dusky view of that terrible apartment, and she almost sunk under the recollected horrors of the moment, when she had drawn aside the curtain, and discovered the object it was meant to conceal.

"Perhaps," said she to herself, "it is now used for a similar purpose; perhaps, that soldier goes, at this dead hour, to watch over the corpse of his friend!" The little remains of her fortitude now gave way to the united force of remembered and anticipated horrors, for the melancholy fate of Madame Montoni appeared to foretel her own. She considered, that, though the Languedoc estates, if she relinquished them, would satisfy Montoni's avarice, they might

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not appease his vengeance, which was seldom pacified but by a terrible sacrifice; and she even thought, that, were she to resign them, the fear of justice might urge him either to detain her a prisoner, or to take away her life.

They were now arrived at the gates, where Bertrand, observing the light glimmer through a small casement of the portal-chamber, called aloud; and the soldier, looking out, demanded who was there. "Here, I have brought you a prisoner," said Ugo, "open the gate, and let us in."

"Tell me first who it is that demands entrance," replied the soldier. "What! my old comrade," cried Ugo, "don't you know me? not know Ugo? I have brought home a prisoner here, bound hand and foot —a fellow who has been drinking Tuscany wine, while we here have been fighting."

"You will not rest till you meet with your match," said Bertrand sullenly. "Hah!

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my comrade, is it you?" said the soldier— "I'll be with you directly."

Emily presently heard his steps descending the stairs within, and then the heavy chain fall, and the bolts undraw of a small postern door, which he opened to admit the party. He held the lamp low, to shew the step of the gate, and she found herself once more beneath the gloomy arch, and heard the door close, that seemed to shut her from the world for ever. In the next moment she was in the first court of the castle, where she surveyed the spacious and solitary area, with a kind of calm despair; while the dead hour of the night, the gothic gloom of the surrounding buildings, and the hollow and imperfect echoes which they returned, as Ugo and the soldier conversed together, assisted to increase the melancholy forebodings of her heart. Passing on to the second court, a distant sound broke feebly on the silence, and gradually swelling louder, as they advanced,

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Emily distinguished voices of revelry and laughter, but they were to her far other than sounds of joy. "Why, you have got some Tuscany wine among you, *here*," said Bertrand, "if one may judge by the uproar that is going forward. Ugo has taken a larger share of that than of fighting, I'll be sworn. Who is carousing at this late hour?"

"His *Excellenza* and the Signors," replied the soldier: "it is a sign you are a stranger at the castle, or you would not need to ask the question. They are brave spirits that do without sleep—they generally pass the night in good cheer; would that we, who keep the watch, had a little of it! It is cold work, pacing the ramparts so many hours of the night, if one has no good liquor to warm one's heart."

"Courage, my lad, courage ought to warm your heart," said Ugo. "Courage!" replied the soldier sharply, with a menacing air, which Ugo perceiving, prevented his saying more, by returning to the subject of

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the carousal. "This is a new custom," said he; "when I left the castle, the Signors used to sit up counselling."

"Aye, and for that matter, carousing too," said Bertrand; "but since the siege, they have done nothing but make merry: and if I was they, I would settle accounts with myself, for all my hard fighting, the same way."

They had now crossed the second court, and reached the hall door, when the soldier, bidding them good-night, hastened back to his post; and, while they waited for admittance, Emily considered how she might avoid seeing Montoni, and retire unnoticed to her former apartment, for she shrunk from the thought of encountering either him, or any of his party, at this hour. The uproar within the castle was now so loud, that, though Ugo knocked repeatedly at the hall-door, he was not heard by any of the servants, a circumstance which increased Emily's alarm, while it allowed her time to deliberate on the means

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of retiring unobserved; for, though she might, perhaps, pass up the great staircase unseen, it was impossible she could find the way to her chamber without a light, the difficulty of procuring which, and the danger of wandering about the castle, without one, immediately struck her. Bertrand had only a torch, and she knew that the servants never brought a taper to the door, for the hall was sufficiently lighted by the large tripod lamp, which hung in the vaulted roof; and, while she should wait till Annette could bring a taper, Montoni, or some of his companions, might discover her.

The door was now opened by Carlo; and Emily, having requested him to send Annette immediately with a light to the great gallery, where she determined to await her, passed on with hasty steps towards the staircase; while Bertrand and Ugo, with the torch, followed old Carlo to the servants' hall, impatient for supper and the warm blaze of a wood fire. Emily, lighted only

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by the feeble rays, which the lamp above threw between the arches of this extensive hall, endeavoured to find her way to the staircase, now hid in obscurity; while the shouts of merriment, that burst from a remote apartment, served, by heightening her terror, to increase her perplexity, and she expected, every instant, to see the door of that room open, and Montoni and his companions issue forth. Having, at length, reached the staircase, and found her way to the top, she seated herself on the last stair, to await the arrival of Annette; for the profound darkness of the gallery deterred her from proceeding further, and, while she listened for her footstep, she heard only distant sounds of revelry, which rose in sullen echoes from among the arcades below. Once she thought she heard a low sound from the dark gallery behind her; and turning her eyes, fancied she saw something luminous move in it; and, since she could not, at this moment, subdue the weakness that caused her fears, she quitted

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her seat, and crept softly down a few stairs lower.

Annette not yet appearing, Emily now concluded that she was gone to bed, and that nobody chose to call her up; and the prospect that presented itself, of passing the night in darkness in this place, or in some other equally forlorn (for she knew it would be impracticable to find her way through the intricacies of the galleries to her chamber), drew tears of mingled terror and despondency from her eyes.

While thus she sat, she fancied she heard again an odd sound from the gallery, and she listened, scarcely daring to breathe, but the increasing voices below overcame every other sound. Soon after, she heard Montoni and his companions burst into the hall, who spoke as if they were much intoxicated, and seemed to be advancing towards the staircase. She now remembered that they must come this way to their chambers, and, forgetting all the terrors of the gallery, hurried towards it with an in-

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tention of secreting herself in some of the passages, that opened beyond, and of endeavouring, when the Signors were retired, to find her way to her own room, or to that of Annette, which was in a remote part of the castle.

With extended arms she crept along the gallery, still hearing the voices of persons below, who seemed to stop in conversation at the foot of the staircase; and then, pausing for a moment to listen, half fearful of going further into the darkness of the gallery, where she still imagined, from the noise she had heard, that some person was lurking—"They are already informed of my arrival," said she, and Montoni is coming himself to seek me! In the present state of his mind, his purpose must be desperate." Then, recollecting the scene that had passed in the corridor, on the night preceding her departure from the castle, "O Valancourt!" said she, "I must then resign you for ever. To brave any longer the injustice of Montoni, would not be

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fortitude, but rashness." Still the voices below did not draw nearer, but they became louder, and she distinguished those of Verezzi and Bertolini above the rest, while the few words she caught made her listen more anxiously for others. The conversation seemed to concern herself; and, having ventured to step a few paces nearer to the staircase, she discovered that they were disputing about her, each seeming to claim some former promise of Montoni, who appeared, at first, inclined to appease and to persuade them to return to their wine, but afterwards to be weary of the dispute, and, saying that he left them to settle it as they could, was returning with the rest of the party to the apartment he had just quitted. Verezzi then stopped him. "Where is she, Signor?" said he, in a voice of impatience: "tell us where she is." "I have already told you that I do not know," replied Montoni, who seemed to be somewhat overcome with wine; "but she is most probably gone to her apart-

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ment." Verezzi and Bertolini now desisted from their enquiries, and sprang to the staircase together, while Emily, who, during this discourse, had trembled so excessively, that she had with difficulty supported herself, seemed inspired with new strength the moment she heard the bound of their steps, aud ran along the gallery, dark as it was, with the fleetness of a fawn. But, long before she reached its extremity, the light which Verezzi carried, flashed upon the walls; both appeared, and, instantly perceiving Emily, pursued her. At this moment, Bertolini, whose steps, though swift, were not steady, and whose impatience overcame what little caution he had hitherto used, stumbled, and fell at his length. The lamp fell with him, and was presently expiring on the floor; but Verezzi, regardless of saving it, seized the advantage this accident gave him over his rival, and followed Emily, to whom, however, the light had shown one of the passages that branched from the gallery, and she instantly

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turned into it. Verezzi could just discern the way she had taken, and this he pursued: but the sound of her steps soon sunk in distance, while he, less acquainted with the passage, was obliged to proceed through the dark with caution, lest he should fall down a flight of steps, such as in this extensive old castle frequently terminated an avenue. This passage at length brought Emily to the corridor, into which her own chamber opened, and, not hearing any footstep, she paused to take breath, and consider what was the safest design to be adopted. She had followed this passage merely because it was the first that appeared, and now that she had reached the end of it was as perplexed as before. Whither to go, or how further to find her way in the dark, she knew not; she was aware only that she must not seek her apartment, for there she would certainly be sought, and her danger increased every instant, while she remained near it. Her spirits and her breath, however, were so much exhausted,

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that she was compelled to rest, for a few minutes, at the end of the passage, and still she heard no steps approaching. As thus she stood, light glimmered under an opposite door of the gallery, and, from its situation, she knew that it was the door of that mysterious chamber where she had made a discovery so shocking, that she never remembered it but with the utmost horror. That there should be light in this chamber, and at this hour, excited her strong surprise, and she felt a momentary terror concerning it, which did not permit her to look again, for her spirits were now in such a state of weakness, that she almost expected to see the door slowly open, and some horrible object appear at it. Still she listened for a step along the passage, and looked up it, where not a ray of light appearing, she concluded that Verezzi had gone back for the lamp; and, believing that he would shortly be there, she again considered which way she should go,

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or rather which way she could find in the dark.

A faint ray still glimmered under the opposite door, but so great, and perhaps so just was her horror of that chamber, that she would not again have tempted its secrets, though she had been certain of obtaining the light so important to her safety. She was still breathing with difficulty, and resting at the end of the passage, when she heard a restling sound, and then a low voice, so very near her, that it seemed close to her ear; but she had presence of mind to check her emotions, and to remain quite still; in the next moment, she perceived it to be the voice of Verezzi, who did not appear to know that she was there, but to have spoken to himself. "The air is fresher here," said he: "this should be the corridor." Perhaps, he was one of those heroes, whose courage can defy an enemy better than darkness, and he tried to rally his spirits with the sound of his own voice. However this might be,

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he turned to the light, and proceeded with the same stealing steps towards Emily's apartment, apparently forgetting that in darkness she could easily elude his search, even in her chamber; and, like an intoxicated person, he followed pertinaciously the one idea that had possessed his imagination.

The moment she heard his steps steal away, she left her station, and moved softly to the other end of the corridor, determined to trust again to chance, and to quit it by the first avenue she could find; but before she could effect this, light broke upon the walls of the gallery, and, looking back, she saw Verezzi crossing it towards her chamber. She now glided into a passage, that opened on the left, without, as she thought, being perceived; but, in the next instant, another light glimmering at the further end of this passage, threw her into new terror. While she stopped and hesitated which way to go, the pause allowed her to perceive that it

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was Annette, who advanced, and she hurried to meet her: but her imprudence again alarmed Emily, on perceiving whom, she burst into a scream of joy, and it was some minutes before she could be prevailed with to be silent, or to release her mistress from the ardent clasp in which she held her. When, at length, Emily made Annette comprehend her danger, they hurried towards Annette's room, which was in a distant part of the castle. No apprehensions, however, could yet silence the latter. "Oh dear ma'amselle," said she, as they passed along, "what a terrified time have I had of it! Oh! I thought I should have died an hundred times! I never thought I should live to see you again! and I never was so glad to see any body in my whole life, as I am to see you now." "Hark!" cried Emily, "we are pursued; that was the echo of steps!" "No, ma'amselle," said Annette, "it was only the echo of a door shutting; sound runs along these vaulted passages so, that one

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is continually deceived by it; if one does but speak, or cough, it makes a noise as loud as a cannon." "Then there is the greater necessity for us to be silent," said Emily: "Pr'ythee say no more till we reach your chamber." Here, at length, they arrived, without interruption, and Annette having fastened the door, Emily sat down on her little bed, to recover breath and composure. To her enquiry, whether Valancourt was among the prisoners in the castle, Annette replied, that she had not been able to hear, but that she knew there were several persons confined. She then proceeded, in her tedious way, to give an account of the siege, or rather a detail of her terrors and various sufferings during the attack. "But," added she, "when I heard the shouts of victory from the ramparts, I thought we were all taken and gave myself up for lost, instead of which, *we* had driven the enemy away. I went then to the north gallery, and saw a great many of them scampering away

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among the mountains; but the rampart walls were all in ruins, as one may say, and there was a dismal sight to see down among the woods below, where the poor fellows were lying in heaps, but were carried off presently by their comrades. While the siege was going on, the Signor was here, and there, and every-where, at the same time, as Ludovico told me, for he would not let me see any thing hardly, and locked me up, as he had often done before, in a room in the middle of the castle, and used to bring me food, and come and talk with me as often as he could; and I must say, if it had not been for Ludovico, I should have died outright."

"Well, Annette," said Emily, "and how have affairs gone on since the siege?"

"O! sad hurly-burly doing ma'amselle," replied Annette; "the Signors have done n thing but sit and drink and game, ever since. They sit up all night, and play among themselves for all those riches and fine things they brought in some time

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since, when they used to go out a-robbing, or as good, for days together; and then they have dreadful quarrels, about who loses and who wins. That fierce Signor Verezzi is always losing, as they tell me, and Signor Orsino wins from him, and thus makes him very wroth, and they have had several hard set-to's about it. Then, all those fine ladies are at the castle still; and I declare I am frighted whenever I meet any of them in the passages."—

"Surely, Annette," said Emily starting, "I heard a noise: listen."——After a long pause, "No, ma'amselle," said Annette, "it was only the wind in the gallery; I often hear it, when it shakes the old doors at the other end. But won't you go to bed, ma'amselle? you surely will not sit up starving all night." Emily now laid herself down on the mattress, and desired Annette to leave the lamp burning on the hearth; having done which, the latter placed herself beside Emily, who, however, was not suffered

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to sleep, for she again thought she heard a noise from the passage; and Annette was again trying to convince her that it was only the wind, when footsteps were distinctly heard near the door. Annette was now starting from the bed, but Emily prevailed with her to remain there, and listened with her in a state of terrible expectation. The steps still loitered at the door, when presently an attempt was made on the lock, and, in the next instant, a voice called. "For heaven's sake, Annette, do not answer," said Emily softly, "remain quite still; but I fear we must extinguish the lamp, or its glare will betray us." "Holy Virgin!" exclaimed Annette, forgetting her discretion, "I would not be in darkness now for the whole world." While she spoke, the voice became louder than before, and repeated Annette's name. "Blessed Virgin!" cried she suddenly, "it is only Ludovico." She rose to open the door, but Emily prevented her, till they should be more cer-

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tain, that it was he alone; with whom Annette, at length, talked for some time, and learned, that he was come to enquire after herself, whom he had let out of her room to go to Emily, and that he was now returned to lock her in again. Emily, fearful of being overheard, if they conversed any longer through the door, consented that it should be opened, and a young man appeared, whose open countenance confirmed the favourable opinion of him, which his care of Annette had already prompted her to form. She entreated his protection, should Verezzi make this requisite; and Ludovico offered to pass the night in an old chamber, adjoining, that opened from the gallery, and, on the first alarm, to come to their defence.

Emily was much soothed by this proposal; and Ludovico, having lighted his lamp, went to his station, while she once more endeavoured to repose on her mattress. But a variety of interests pressed

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upon her attention, and prevented sleep. She thought much on what Annette had told her of the dissolute manners of Montoni and his associates, and more of his present conduct towards herself, and of the danger from which she had just escaped. From the view of her present situation she shrunk, as from a new picture of terror. She saw herself in a castle, inhabited by vice and violence, seated beyond the reach of law or justice, and in the power of a man whose perseverance was equal to every occasion, and in whom passions, of which revenge was not the weakest, entirely supplied the place of principles. She was compelled, once more, to acknowledge, that it would be folly, and not fortitude, any longer to dare his power; and, resigning all hopes of future happiness with Valancourt, she determined, that, on the following morning, she would compromise with Montoni, and give up her estates, on condition that he would permit her immediate return to France. Such con-

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siderations kept her waking for many hours; but the night passed, without further alarm from Verezzi.

On the next morning, Emily had a long conversation with Ludovico, in which she heard circumstances concerning the castle, and received hints of the designs of Montoni, that considerably increased her alarms. On expressing her surprise, that Ludovico, who seemed to be so sensible of the evils of his situation, should continue in it, he informed her, that it was not his intention to do so, and she then ventured to ask him, if he would assist her to escape from the castle. Ludovico assured her of his readiness to attempt this, but strongly represented the difficulty of the enterprise, and the certain destruction which must ensue, should Montoni overtake them before they had passed the mountains; he, however, promised to be watchful of every circumstance that might contribute to the success of the attempt, and to think upon some plan of departure.

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Emily now confided to him the name of Valancourt, and begged he would enquire for such a person among the prisoners in the castle; for the faint hope which this conversation awakened, made her now recede from her resolution of an immediate compromise with Montoni. She determined, if possible, to delay this, till she heard further from Ludovico; and, if his designs were found to be impracticable, to resign the estates at once. Her thoughts were on this subject, when Montoni, who was now recovered from the intoxication of the preceding night, sent for her, and she immediately obeyed the summons. He was alone. "I find," said he, "that you were not in your chamber, last night; where were you?" Emily related to him some circumstances of her alarm, and entreated his protection from a repetition of them. "You know the terms of my protection," said he; "if you really value this, you will secure it." His open declaration, that he would only conditionally protect her, while

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she remained a prisoner in the castle, shewed Emily the necessity of an immediate compliance with his terms; but she first demanded, whether he would permit her immediately to depart, if she gave up her claim to the contested estates. In a very solemn manner he then assured her that he would, and immediately laid before her a paper, which was to transfer the right of those estates to himself.

She was for a considerable time unable to sign it, and her heart was torn with contending interests, for she was about to resign the happiness of all her future years—the hope which had sustained her in so many hours of adversity.

After hearing from Montoni a recapitulation of the conditions of her compliance, and a remonstrance that his time was valuable, she put her hand to the paper; when she had done which, she fell back in her chair, but soon recovered, and desired that he would give orders for her departure, and that he would allow An-

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nette to accompany her. Montoni smiled. "It was necessary to deceive you," said he—"there was no other way of making you act reasonably; you shall go, but it must not be at present. I must first secure these estates by possession: when that is done, you may return to France if you will."

The deliberate villany with which he violated the solemn engagement he had just entered into, shocked Emily as much as the certainty that she had made a fruitless sacrifice, and must still remain his prisoner. She had no words to express what she felt, and knew that it would have been useless if she had. As she looked piteously at Montoni, he turned away, and at the same time desired she would withdraw to her apartment; but, unable to leave the room, she sat down in a chair near the door, and sighed heavily. She had neither words nor tears.

"Why will you indulge this childish grief?" said he. "Endeavour to strengthen

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your mind to bear patiently what cannot now be avoided; you have no real evil to lament; be patient, and you will be sent back to France. At present retire to your apartment."

"I dare not go, sir," said she, "where I shall be liable to the intrusion of Signor Verezzi." "Have I not promised to protect you?" said Montoni. "You have promised, sir,"———replied Emily, after some hesitation. "And is not my promise sufficient?" added he sternly. "You will recollect your former promise, Signor," said Emily, trembling, "and may determine for me whether I ought to rely upon this." "Will you provoke me to declare to you that I will not protect you then?" said Montoni, in a tone of haughty displeasure. "If that will satisfy you, I will do it immediately. Withdraw to your chamber, before I retract my promise; you have nothing to fear there." Emily left the room, and moved slowly into the hall, where the fear of meeting Verezzi,

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or Bertolini, made her quicken her steps, though she could scarcely support herself; and soon after she reached once more her own apartment. Having looked fearfully round her to examine if any person was there, and having searched every part of it, she fastened the door, and sat down by one of the casements. Here, while she looked out for some hope to support her fainting spirits, which had been so long harassed and oppressed, that, if she had not now struggled much against misfortune, they would have left her, perhaps, for ever, she endeavoured to believe that Montoni did really intend to permit her return to France as soon as he had secured her property, and that he would, in the mean time, protect her from insult; but her chief hope rested with Ludovico, who, she doubted not, would be zealous in her cause, though he seemed almost in despair of success in it. One circumstance, however, she had to rejoice in. Her prudence, or rather her fears, had saved her

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from mentioning the name of Valancourt to Montoni, which she was several times on the point of doing, before she signed the paper, and of stipulating for his release, if he should be really a prisoner in the castle. Had she done this, Montoni's jealous fears would now probably have loaded Valancourt with new severities, and have suggested the advantage of holding him a captive for life.

Thus passed the melancholy day, as she had before passed many in the same chamber. When night drew on, she would have withdrawn herself to Annette's bed, had not a particular interest inclined her to remain in this chamber, in spite of her fears; for, when the castle should be still, and the customary hour arrived, she determined to watch for the music which she had formerly heard. Though its sounds might not enable her positively to determine whether Valancourt was there, they would perhaps strengthen her opinion that he was, and impart the comfort,

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so necessary to her present support.—But on the other hand, if all should be silent—! She hardly dared to suffer her thoughts to glance that way, but waited, with impatient expectation, the approaching hour.

The night was stormy; the battlements of the castle appeared to rock in the wind, and, at intervals, long groans seemed to pass on the air, such as those which often deceive the melancholy mind in tempests, and amidst scenes of desolation. Emily heard, as formerly, the sentinels pass along the terrace to their posts, and, looking out from her casement, observed that the watch was doubled; a precaution which appeared necessary enough, when she threw her eyes on the walls, and saw their shattered condition. The well-known sounds of the soldiers' march, and of their distant voices, which passed her in the wind, and were lost again, recalled to her memory the melancholy sensation she had suffered, when she formerly heard the same sounds; and occasioned almost involuntary com-

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parisons between her present and her late situation. But this was no subject for congratulation, and she wisely checked the course of her thoughts, while, as the hour was not yet come, in which she had been accustomed to hear the music, she closed the casement, and endeavoured to await it in patience. The door of the staircase she tried to secure, as usual, with some of the furniture of the room; but this expedient her fears now represented to her to be very inadequate to the power and perseverance of Verezzi; and she often looked at a large and heavy chest, that stood in the chamber, with wishes that she and Annette had strength enough to move it. While she blamed the long stay of this girl, who was still with Ludovico and some other of the servants, she trimmed her wood fire, to make the room appear less desolate, and sat down beside it with a book, which her eyes perused, while her thoughts wandered to Valancourt and her own misfortunes. As she sat thus, she

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thought, in a pause of the wind, she distinguished music, and went to the casement to listen, but the loud swell of the gust overcame every other sound. When the wind sunk again, she heard distinctly, in the deep pause that succeeded, the sweet strings of a lute; but again the rising tempest bore away the notes, and again was succeeded by a solemn pause. Emily, trembling with hope and fear, opened her casement to listen, and to try whether her own voice could be heard by the musician; for to endure any longer this state of torturing suspense concerning Valancourt, seemed to be utterly impossible. There was a kind of breathless stillness in the chambers that permitted her to distinguish from below the tender notes of the very lute she had formerly heard, and with it a plaintive voice, made sweeter by the low rustling sound, that now began to creep along the wood-tops, till it was lost in the rising wind. Their tall heads then began to wave, while, through a forest of pine,

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on the left, the wind, groaning heavily, rolled onward over the woods below, bending them almost to their roots; and, as the long-resounding gale swept away, other woods, on the right, seemed to answer the "loud lament;" then, others, further still, softened it into a murmur, that died into silence. Emily listened, with mingled awe and expectation, hope and fear; and again the melting sweetness of the lute was heard, and the same solemn-breathing voice. Convinced that these came from an apartment underneath, she leaned far out of her window, that she might discover whether any light was there; but the casements below, as well as those above, were sunk so deep in the thick walls of the castle, that she could not see them, or even the faint ray that probably glimmered through their bars. She then ventured to call; but the wind bore her voice to the other end of the terrace, and then the music was heard as before, in the pause of the gust. Suddenly,

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she thought she heard a noise in her chamber, and she drew herself within the casement; but, in a moment after, distinguishing Annette's voice at the door, she concluded it was her she had heard before, and she let her in. "Move softly, Annette, to the casement," said she, "and listen with me; the music is returned." They were silent, till, the measure changing, Annette exclaimed, "Holy Virgin! I know that song well; it is a French song, one of the favourite songs of my dear country." This was the ballad Emily had heard on a former night, though not the one she had first listened to from the fishing house in Gascony. "O! it is a Frenchman that sings," said Annette; "it must be Monsieur Valancourt." "Hark! Annette, do not speak so loud," said Emily, "we may be overheard." "What! by the Chevalier?" said Annette. "No," replied Emily mournfully, "but by somebody, who may report us to the Signor. What reason have you to think it is Mon-

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sieur Valancourt, who sings? But hark! now the voice swells louder! Do you recollect those tones? I fear to trust my own judgment." "I never happened to hear the Chevalier sing, mademoiselle," replied Annette, who, as Emily was disappointed to perceive, had no stronger reason for concluding this to be Valancourt, than that the musician must be a Frenchman. Soon after, she heard the song of the fishing-house, and distinguished her own name, which was repeated so distinctly, that Annette had heard it also. She trembled, sunk into a chair by the window, and Annette called aloud, "Monsieur Valancourt! Monsieur Valancourt!" while Emily endeavoured to check her, but she repeated the call more loudly than before, and the lute and the voice suddenly stopped. Emily listened, for some time, in a state of intolerable suspense; but no answer being returned, "It does not signify, mademoiselle," said Annette; "it is the Chevalier, and I will speak to him."

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"No, Annette," said Emily, "I think I will speak myself; if it is he, he will know my voice, and speak again." "Who is it," said she, "that sings at this late hour?"

A long silence ensued, and, having repeated the question, she perceived some faint accents, mingling in the blast that swept by; but the sounds were so distant, and passed so suddenly, that she could scarcely hear them, much less distinguish the words they uttered, or recognise the voice. After another pause, Emily called again; and again they heard a voice, but as faintly as before; and they perceived, that there were other circumstances, besides the strength and direction of the wind, to contend with; for the great depth, at which the casements were fixed in the castle walls, contributed, still more than the distance, to prevent articulated sounds from being understood, though general ones were easily heard. Emily, however, ventured to believe, from the circumstance

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of her voice alone having been answered, that the stranger was Valancourt, as well as that he knew her, and she gave herself up to speechless joy. Annette, however, was not speechless.—She renewed her calls, but received no answer; and Emily, fearing that a further attempt, which certainly was, at present, highly dangerous, might expose them to the guards of the castle, while it could not perhaps terminate her suspense, insisted on Annette's dropping the enquiry for this night, though she determined herself to question Ludovico on the subject, in the morning, more urgently than she had yet done. She was now enabled to say, that the stranger, whom she had formerly heard, was still in the castle, and to direct Ludovico to that part of it in which he was confined.

Emily, attended by Annette, continued at the casement for some time, but all remained still; they heard neither lute or voice again, and Emily was now as much oppressed by anxious joy, as she lately

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was by a sense of her misfortunes. With hasty steps she paced the room, now half calling on Valancourt's name, then suddenly stopping, and now going to the casement and listening, where, however, she heard nothing but the solemn waving of the woods. Sometimes her impatience to speak to Ludovico prompted her to send Annette to call him; but a sense of the impropriety of this at midnight restrained her. Annette, meanwhile, as impatient as her mistress, went as often to the casement to listen, and returned almost as much disappointed. She, at length, mentioned Signor Verezzi, and her fear lest he should enter the chamber by the staircase door. "But the night is now almost past, mademoiselle," said she, recollecting herself: "there is the morning light beginning to peep over those mountains yonder, in the east."

Emily had forgotten, till this moment, that such a person existed as Verezzi, and all the danger that had appeared to threaten

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her; but the mention of his name renewed her alarm, and she remembered the old chest that she had wished to place against the door, which she now, with Annette, attempted to move, but it was so heavy that they could not lift it from the floor. "What is in this great old chest, mademoiselle," said Annette, "that makes it so weighty?" Emily having replied, "that she found it in the chamber, when she first came to the castle, and had never examined it,"—"Then I will, ma'amselle," said Annette, and she tried to lift the lid; but this was held by a lock, for which she had no key, and which, indeed, appeared, from its peculiar construction, to open with a spring. The morning now glimmered through the casements, and the wind had sunk into a calm. Emily looked out upon the dusky woods, and on the twilight mountains, just stealing on the eye, and saw the whole scene, after the storm, lying in profound stillness, the woods motionless, and the clouds above, through which

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the dawn trembled, scarcely appearing to move along the heavens. One soldier was pacing the terrace beneath, with measured steps; and two, more distant, were sunk asleep on the walls, wearied with the night's watch. Having inhaled, for a while, the pure spirit of the air, and of vegetation, which the late rains had called forth; and having listened, once more, for a note of music, she now closed the casement and retired to rest.

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CHAP. IX.

"Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
For many a long month lost in snow profound,
When Sol from Cancer sends the seasons bland,
And in their northern cave the storms hath bound;
From silent mountains, straight, with startling sound,
Torrents are hurl'd, green hills emerge, and lo,
The trees with foilage, cliffs with flowers are crown'd;
Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's heart o'erflow." BEATTIE.

SEVERAL of her succeeding days passed in suspense, for Ludovico could only learn from the soldiers that there was a prisoner in the apartment, described to him by Emily, and that he was a Frenchman, whom they had taken in one of their skirmishes, with a party of his countrymen. During this interval, Emily escaped the persecutions of Bertolini and Verezzi, by confining herself to her apartment; except that sometimes, in an evening, she ven-

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tured to walk in the adjoining corridor. Montoni appeared to respect his last promise, though he had prophaned his first; for to his protection only could she attribute her present repose; and in this she was now so secure, that she did not wish to leave the castle till she could obtain some certainty concerning Valancourt; for which she waited, indeed, without any sacrifice of her own comfort, since no circumstance had occurred to make her escape probable.

On the fourth day, Ludovico informed her, that he had hopes of being admitted to the presence of the prisoner; it being the turn of a soldier, with whom he had been for some time familiar, to attend him on the following night. He was not deceived in his hope; for, under pretence of carrying in a pitcher of water, he entered the prison, though, his prudence having prevented him from telling the sentinel the real motive of his visit, he was obliged to

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make his conference with the prisoner a very short one.

Emily awaited the result in her own apartment, Ludovico having promised to accompany Annette to the corridor in the evening; where, after several hours impatiently counted, he arrived. Emily, having then uttered the name of Valancourt, could articulate no more, but hesitated in trembling expectation. "The Chevalier would not entrust me with his name, Signora," replied Ludovico; "but when I just mentioned your's, he seemed overwhelmed with joy, though he was not so much surprised as I expected." "Does he then remember me?" she exclaimed.

"O! it is Mons. Valancourt," said Annette, and looked impatiently at Ludovico, who understood her look, and replied to Emily: "Yes, lady, the Chevalier does, indeed, remember you, and, I am sure, has a very great regard for you, and I made bold to say you had for him. He then enquired

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how you came to know he was in the castle, and whether you ordered me to speak to him. The first question I could not answer, but the second I did; and then he went off into his ecstasies again. I was afraid his joy would have betrayed him to the sentinel at the door."

"But how does he look, Ludovico?" interrupted Emily: "is he not melancholy and ill with his long confinement?"— "Why, as to melancholy, I saw no symptom of that, lady, while I was with him, for he seemed in the finest spirits I ever saw any body in, in all my life. His countenance was all joy, and, if one may judge from that, he was very well; but I did not ask him." "Did he send me no message?" said Emily. "O yes, Signora, and something besides," replied Ludovico, who searched his pockets. "Surely, I have not lost it," added he. "The Chevalier said he would have written, madam, if he had had pen and ink, and was going to have sent a very long message,

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when the sentinel entered the room, but not before he had given me this." Ludovico then drew forth a miniature from his bosom, which Emily received with a trembling hand, and perceived to be a portrait of herself—the very picture which her mother had lost so strangely in the fishing-house at La Vallée.

Tears of mingled joy and tenderness flowed to her eyes, while Ludovico proceeded——"Tell your lady," said the Chevalier, as he gave me the picture, 'that this has been my companion, and only solace in all my misfortunes. Tell her, that I have worn it next my heart, and that I send it her as the pledge of an affection which can never die; that I would not part with it, but to her, for the wealth of worlds; and that I now part with it, only in the hope of soon receiving it from her hands. Tell her——' Just then, Signora, the sentinel came in, and the Chevalier said no more; but he had before asked me to contrive an interview for him with

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you; and when I told him how little hope I had of prevailing with the guard to assist me, he said that was not, perhaps, of so much consequence as I imagined, and bade me contrive to bring back your answer, and he would inform me of more than he chose to do then. So this, I think, lady, is the whole of what passed."

"How, Ludovico, shall I reward you for your zeal?" said Emily: "but, indeed, I do not now possess the means. When can you see the Chevalier again?" "That is uncertain, Signora," replied he. "It depends upon who stands guard next: there are not more than one or two among them, from whom I would dare to ask admittance to the prison-chamber."

"I need not bid you remember, Ludovico," resumed Emily, "how very much interested I am in your seeing the Chevalier soon; and, when you do so, tell him that I have received the picture, and, with the sentiments he wished. Tell him I have suffered much, and still suffer—"

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She paused. "But shall I tell him you will see him, lady?" said Ludovico. "Most certainly I will," replied Emily. "But when, Signora, and where?" "That must depend upon circumstances," returned Emily. "The place and the hour must be regulated by his opportunities."

"As to the place, mademoiselle," said Annette, "there is no other place in the castle, besides this corridor, where *we* can see him in safety, you know; and, as for the hour—it must be when all the Signors are asleep, if that ever happens!" "You may mention these circumstances to the Chevalier, Ludovico," said she, checking the flippancy of Annette, "and leave them to his judgment and opportunity. Tell him, my heart is unchanged. But, above all, let him see you again as soon as possible; and, Ludovico, I think it is needless to tell you I shall very anxiously look for you." Having then wished her good night, Ludovico descended the staircase, and Emily retired to rest, but not to sleep.

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for joy now rendered her as wakeful as she had ever been from grief. Montoni and his castle had all vanished from her mind, like the frightful vision of a necromancer, and she wandered, once more, in fairy scenes of unfading happiness:

. . . . . "as when, beneath the beam
Of summer moons, the distant woods among,
Or by some flood, all silver'd with the gleam,
The soft embodied Fays through airy portals stream."

A week elapsed before Ludovico again visited the prison; for the sentinels, during that period, were men in whom he could not confide, and he feared to awaken curiosity, by asking to see their prisoner. In this interval, he communicated to Emily terrific reports of what was passing in the castle; of riots, quarrels, and of carousals more alarming than either; while from some circumstances which he mentioned, she not only doubted whether Montoni meant ever to release her, but greatly feared that he had designs concerning

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her—such as she had formerly dreaded. Her name was frequently mentioned in the conversations which Bertolini and Verezzi held together, and, at those times, they were frequently in contention. Montoni had lost large sums to Verezzi, so that there was a dreadful possibility of his designing her to be a substitute for the debt; but as she was ignorant that he had formerly encouraged the hopes of Bertolini, also, concerning herself, after the latter had done him some signal service, she knew not how to account for these contentions between Bertolini and Verezzi. The cause of them, however, appeared to be of little consequence, for she thought she saw destruction approaching in many forms, and her entreaties to Ludovico to contrive an escape, and to see the prisoner again, were more urgent than ever.

At length, he informed her that he had again visited the Chevalier, who had directed him to confide in the guard of the prison, from whom he had already re-

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ceived some instances of kindness, and who had promised to permit his going into the castle for half an hour, on the ensuing night, when Montoni and his companions should be engaged at their carousals. "This was kind to be sure," added Ludovico: "but Sebastian knows he runs no risque in letting the Chevalier out, for; if he can get beyond the bars and iron doors of the castle, he must be cunning indeed. But the Chevalier desired me, Signora, to go to you immediately, and to beg you would allow him to visit you this night, if it was only for a moment, for that he could no longer live under the same roof without seeing you; the hour, he said, he could not mention, for it must depend on circumstances (just as you said, Signora); and the place he desired you would appoint, as knowing which was best for your own safety."

Emily was now so much agitated by the near prospect of meeting Valancourt, that it was some time before she could give

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any answer to Ludovico, or consider of the place of meeting; when she did, she saw none that promised so much security, as the corridor, near her own apartment, which she was checked from leaving, by the apprehension of meeting any of Montoni's guests, on their way to their rooms; and she dismissed the scruples which delicacy opposed, now that a serious danger was to be avoided by encountering them. It was settled, therefore, that the Chevalier should meet her in the corridor, at that hour of the night which Ludovico, who was to be upon the watch, should judge safest: and Emily, as may be imagined, passed this interval in a tumult of hope and joy, anxiety and impatience. Never, since her residence in the castle, had she watched, with so much pleasure, the sun set behind the mountains, and twilight shade and darkness veil the scene, as on this evening. She counted the notes of the great clock, and listened to the steps of the sentinels, as they changed the watch,

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only to rejoice that another hour was gone. "O Valancourt!" said she, "after all I have suffered; after our long, long separation, when I thought I should never—never see you more—we are still to meet again! O! I have endured grief, and anxiety, and terror, and let me, then, not sink beneath this joy!" These were moments, when it was impossible for her to feel emotions of regret, or melancholy, for any ordinary interests—even the reflection, that she had resigned the estates which would have been a provision for herself and Valancourt for life, threw only a light and transient shade upon her spirits. The idea of Valancourt, and that she should see him so soon, alone occupied her heart.

At length the clock struck twelve; she opened the door to listen if any noise was in the castle, and heard only distant shouts of riot and laughter, echoed feebly along the gallery. She guessed that the Signor and his guests were at the banquet. "They are now engaged for the night," said she;

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"and Valancourt will soon be here."—Having softly closed the door, she paced the room with impatient steps, and often went to the casement to listen for the lute; but all was silent, and, her agitation every moment increasing, she was at length unable to support herself, and sat down by the window. Annette, whom she detained, was, in the mean time, as loquacious as usual; but Emily heard scarcely any thing she said, and having at length risen to the casement, she distinguished the chords of the lute, struck with an expressive hand, and then the voice she had formerly listened to accompanied it.

"Now rising love they fann'd, now pleasing dole
They breath'd in tender musings through the heart;
And now a graver, sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands an hymn impart!"

Emily wept in doubtful joy and tenderness; and, when the strain ceased, she considered it as a signal that Valancourt was about to leave the prison. Soon after, she

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heard steps in the corridor;—they were the light, quick steps of hope; she could scarcely support herself, as they approached, but, opening the door of the apartment, she advanced to meet Valancourt, and in the next moment sunk in the arms of a stranger. His voice—his countenance instantly convinced her, and she fainted away.

On reviving, she found herself supported by the stranger, who was watching over her recovery with a countenance of ineffable tenderness and anxiety. She had no spirits for reply, or enquiry; she asked no questions, but burst into tears, and disengaged herself from his arms; when the expression of his countenance changed to surprise and disappointment, and he turned to Ludovico for an explanation; Annette soon gave the information, which Ludovico could not. "O, sir!" said she, in a voice, interrupted with sobs; "O, sir! you are not the other Chevalier. We expected Monsieur Valancourt, but you are

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not he! O Ludovico! how could you deceive us so? my poor lady will never recover it—never!" The stranger, who now appeared much agitated, attempted to speak, but his words faltered; and then striking his hand against his forehead, as if in sudden despair, he walked abruptly to the other end of the corridor.

Suddenly, Annette dried her tears, and spoke to Ludovico. "But, perhaps," said she, "after all, the other Chevalier is not this: perhaps the Chevalier Valancourt is still below. Emily raised her head. "No," replied Ludovico, "Monsieur Valancourt never was below, if this gentleman is not he.——If you, sir," said Ludovico, addressing the stranger, "would but have had the goodness to trust me with your name, this mistake had been avoided." "Most true," replied the stranger, speaking in broken Italian, "but it was of the utmost consequence to me that my name should be concealed from Montoni.—Madam," added he then, ad-

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dressing Emily in French, "will you permit me to apologize for the pain I have occasioned you, and to explain to you alone my name, and the circumstance which has led me into this error? I am of France;—I am your countryman;—we are met in a foreign land." Emily tried to compose her spirits; yet she hesitated to grant his request. At length, desiring that Ludovico would wait on the staircase, and detaining Annette, she told the stranger that her woman understood very little Italian, and begged he would communicate what he wished to say in that language.—Having withdrawn to a distant part of the corridor, he said, with a long-drawn sigh, "You, madam, are no stranger to me, though I am so unhappy as to be unknown to you.—My name is Du Pont; I am of France, of Gascony, your native province, and have long admired,—and why should I affect to disguise it?—have long loved you." He paused, but, in the next moment, proceeded. "My family,

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madam, is probably not unknown to you, for we lived within a few miles of La Vallée, and I have, sometimes, had the happiness of meeting you, on visits in the neighbourhood. I will not offend you by repeating how much you interested me; how much I loved to wander in the scenes you frequented; how often I visited your favourite fishing-house, and lamented the circumstance which at that time forbade me to reveal my passion. I will not explain how I surrendered to temptation, and became possessed of a treasure which was to me inestimable; a treasure, which I committed to your messenger, a few days ago, with expectations very different from my present ones. I will say nothing of these circumstances, for I know they will avail me little; let me only supplicate from you forgiveness, and the picture which I so unwarily returned. Your generosity will pardon the theft, and restore the prize. My crime has been my punishment; for the portrait I stole has contri-

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buted to nourish a passion, which must still be my torment."

Emily now interrupted him. "I think, sir, I may leave it to your integrity to determine, whether, after what has just appeared, concerning Mons. Valancourt, I ought to return the picture. I think you will acknowledge that this would not be generosity; and you will allow me to add that it would be doing myself an injustice. I must consider myself honoured by your good opinion, but"——and she hesitated, —"the mistake of this evening makes it unnecessary for me to say more."

"It does, madam,—alas! it does!" said the stranger, who, after a long pause, proceeded.—"But you will allow me to shew my disinterestedness, though not my love, and will accept the services I offer. Yet, alas! what services can I offer? I am myself a prisoner, a sufferer, like you. But, dear as liberty is to me, I would not seek it through half the hazards I would encounter to deliver you from this recess of

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vice. Accept the offered services of a friend; do not refuse me the reward of having, at least, attempted to deserve your thanks."

"You deserve them already, sir," said Emily; "the wish deserves my warmest thanks. But you will excuse me for reminding you of the danger you incur by prolonging this interview. It will be a great consolation to me to remember, whether your friendly attempts to release me succeed or not, that I have a countryman who would so generously protect me."—Monsieur Du Pont took her hand, which she but feebly attempted to withdraw, and pressed it respectfully to his lips. "Allow me to breathe another fervent sigh for your happiness," said he, "and to applaud myself for an affection which I cannot conquer." As he said this, Emily heard a noise from her apartment, and, turning round, saw the door from the staircase open, and a man rush into her chamber. "I will teach you to conquer it,"

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cried he, as he advanced into the corridor, and drew a stiletto, which he aimed at Du Pont, who was unarmed, but who, stepping back, avoided the blow, and then sprung upon Verezzi, from whom he wrenched the stiletto. While they struggled in each other's grasp, Emily, followed by Annette, ran further into the corridor, calling on Ludovico, who was, however, gone from the staircase, and, as she advanced, terrified and uncertain what to do, a distant noise, that seemed to arise from the hall, reminded her of the danger she was incurring; and, sending Annette forward in search of Ludovico, she returned to the spot where Du Pont and Verezzi were still struggling for victory. It was her own cause which was to be decided with that of the former, whose conduct, independently of this circumstance, would, however, have interested her in his success, even had she not disliked and dreaded Verezzi. She threw herself in a chair, and supplicated them to desist from fur-

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ther violence, till at length Du Pont forced Verezzi to the floor, where he lay stunned by the violence of his fall; and she then entreated Du Pont to escape from the room, before Montoni, or his party, should appear: but he still refused to leave her unprotected; and while Emily, now more terrified for him than for herself, enforced the entreaty, they heard steps ascending the private staircase.

"O you are lost!" cried she, "these are Montoni's people." Du Pont made no reply, but supported Emily, while, with a steady though eager countenance, he waited their appearance, and, in the next moment, Ludovico alone mounted the landing-place. Throwing an hasty glance round the chamber, "Follow me," said he, "as you value your lives; we have not an instant to lose!"

Emily enquired what had occurred, and whither they were to go.

"I cannot stay to tell you now, Signora," replied Ludovico: "fly! fly!"

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She immediately followed him, accompanied by Mons. du Pont, down the staircase, and along a vaulted passage, when suddenly she recollected Annette, and enquired for her. "She awaits us further on, Signora," said Ludovico, almost breathless with haste; "the gates were open, a moment since, to a party just come in from the mountains: they will be shut, I fear, before we can reach them! Through this door, Signora," added Ludovico, holding down the lamp, "take care, here are two steps."

Emily followed, trembling still more than before she had understood that her escape from the castle depended upon the present moment; while Du Pont supported her, and endeavoured, as they passed along, to cheer her spirits.

"Speak low, Signor," said Ludovico, "these passages send echoes all round the castle."

"Take care of the light," cried Emily,

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"you go so fast, that the air will extinguish it."

Ludovico now opened another door, where they found Annette, and the party then descended a short flight of steps into a passage, which, Ludovico said, led round the inner court of the castle, and opened into the outer one. As they advanced, confused and tumultuous sounds, that seemed to come from the inner court, alarmed Emily. "Nay, Signora," said Ludovico, "our only hope is in that tumult; while the Signor's people are busied about the men who are just arrived, we may, perhaps, pass unnoticed through the gates. But hush!" he added, as they approached the small door that opened into the outer court, "if you will remain here a moment, I will go to see whether the gates are open, and any body is in the way. Pray extinguish the light, Signor, if you hear me talking," continued Ludovico, delivering the lamp to Du Pont, "and remain quite still."

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Saying this, he stepped out upon the court, and they closed the door, listening anxiously to his departing steps. No voice, however, was heard in the court, which he was crossing, though a confusion of many voices yet issued from the inner one. "We shall soon be beyond the walls," said Du Pont softly to Emily, "support yourself a little longer, madam, and all will be well."

But soon they heard Ludovico speaking loud, and the voice also of some other person and Du Pont immediately extinguished the lamp. "Ah! it is too late!" exclaimed Emily, "what is to become of us?" They listened again, and then perceived that Ludovico was talking with a sentinel, whose voices were heard also by Emily's favourite dog, that had followed her from the chamber, and now barked loudly. "This dog will betray us!" said Du Pont, "I will hold him."—"I fear he has already betrayed us!" replied Emily. Du Pont, however, caught him up, and,

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again listening to what was going on without, they heard Ludovico say, "I'll watch the gates the while."

"Stay a minute," replied the sentinel, "and you need not have the trouble, for the horses will be sent round to the outer stables, then the gates will be shut, and I can leave my post." "I don't mind the trouble, comrade," said Ludovico, "you will do such another good turn for me, some time. Go—go, and fetch the wine; the rogues that are just come in will drink it all else."

The soldier hesitated, and then called aloud to the people in the second court to know why they did not send out the horses, that the gates might be shut; but they were too much engaged to attend to him, even if they had heard his voice.

"Aye—aye," said Ludovico, "they know better than that; they are sharing it all among them; if you wait till the horses come out, you must wait till the wine is drunk. I have had my share already, but,

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since you do not care about your's, I see no reason why I would not have that too."

"Hold, hold, not so fast," cried the sentinel, "do watch, then, for a moment: I'll be with you presently."

"Don't hurry yourself," said Ludovico, coolly, "I have kept guard before now. But you may leave me your *trombone, that, if the castle should be attacked, you know, I may be able to defend the pass like a hero."

"There, my good fellow," returned the soldier, "there, take it—it has seen service, though it could do little in defending the castle. I'll tell you a good story, though, about this same trombone."

"You'll tell it better when you have had the wine," said Ludovico. "There! they are coming out from the court already."

"I'll have the wine, though," said the sentinel, running off. "I won't keep you a minute."

* A kind of blunderbuss.

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"Take your time, I am in no haste," replied Ludovico, who was already hurrying across the court when the soldier came back. "Whither so fast, friend—whither so fast?" said the latter. "What! is this the way you keep watch? I must stand to my post myself, I see."

"Aye, well," replied Ludovico, "you have saved me the trouble of following you further, for I want to tell you, if you have a mind to drink the Tuscany wine, you must go to Sebastian, he is dealing it out; the other that Frederico has, is not worth having. But you are not likely to have any, I see, for they are all coming out."

"By St. Peter! so they are," said the soldier, and again ran off, while Ludovico, once more at liberty, hastened to the door of the passage, where Emily was sinking under the anxiety this long discourse had occasioned; but, on his telling them the court was clear, they followed him to the gates, without waiting another instant,

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yet not before he had seized two horses that had strayed from the second court, and were picking a scanty meal along the grass, which grew between the pavement of the first.

They passed, without interruption, the dreadful gates, and took the road that led down among the woods, Emily, Monsieur Du Pont, and Annette on foot, and Ludovico, who was mounted on one horse, leading the other. Having reached them, they stopped, while Emily and Annette were placed on horseback with their two protectors, when Ludovico leading the way, they set off as fast as the broken road, and the feeble light which a rising moon threw among the foliage, would permit.

Emily was so much astonished by this sudden departure, that she scarcely dared to believe herself awake; and she yet much doubted whether this adventure would terminate in escape—a doubt which had too much probability to justify it; for, before they quitted the woods, they heard shouts

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in the wind, and, on emerging from them, saw lights moving quickly near the castle above. Du Pont whipped his horse, and with some difficulty compelled him to go faster.

"Ah! poor beast," said Ludovico, "he is weary enough;—he has been out all day: but, Signor, we must fly for it, now; for yonder are the lights coming this way."

Having given his own horse a lash, they now both set off on a full gallop; and, when they again looked back, the lights were so distant as scarcely to be discerned, and the voices were sunk into silence. The travellers then abated their pace, and consulting whither they should direct their course, it was determined they should descend into Tuscany, and endeavour to reach the Mediterranean, where they could readily embark for France. Thither Du Pont meant to attend Emily, if he should learn that the regiment he had accompanied into Italy was returned to his native country.

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They were now in the road which Emily had travelled with Ugo and Bertrand; but Ludovico, who was the only one of the party acquainted with the passes of these mountains, said, that, a little further on, a bye-road, branching from this, would lead them down into Tuscany with very little difficulty; and that, at a few leagues distance, was a small town where necessaries could be procured for their journey.

"But, I hope," added he, "we shall meet with no straggling parties of banditti; some of them are abroad, I know. However, I have got a good trombone, which will be of some service, if we should encounter any of those brave spirits. You have no arms, Signor?"—"Yes," replied Du Pont, "I have the villain's stiletto, who would have stabbed me—but let us rejoice in our escape from Udolpho, nor torment ourselves with looking out for dangers that may never arrive."

The moon was now risen high over the woods, that hung upon the sides of the

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narrow glen, through which they wandered, and afforded them light sufficient to distinguish their way, and to avoid the loose and broken stones that frequently crossed it. They now travelled leisurely, and in profound silence; for they had scarcely yet recovered from the astonishment into which this sudden escape had thrown them.—Emily's mind, especially, was sunk, after the various emotions it had suffered, into a kind of musing stillness, which the reposing beauty of the surrounding scene, and the creeping murmur of the night-breeze among the foliage above, contributed to prolong. She thought of Valancourt and of France with hope, and she would have thought of them with joy, had not the first events of this evening harrassed her spirits too much, to permit her now to feel so lively a sensation. Meanwhile, Emily was alone the object of Du Pont's melancholy consideration; yet, with the despondency he suffered, as he mused on his recent disappointment, was mingled a sweet plea-

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sure, occasioned by her presence, though they did not now exchange a single word. Annette thought of this wonderful escape, of the bustle in which Montoni and his people must be now that their flight was discovered; of her native country, whither she hoped she was returning; and of her marriage with Ludovico, to which there no longer appeared any impediment, for poverty she did not consider such. Ludovico, on his part, congratulated himself on having rescued his Annette and *Signora* Emily from the danger that had surrounded them; on his own liberation from people, whose manners he had long detested; on the freedom he had given to Monsieur DuPont; on his prospect of happiness with the object of his affections; and not a little on the address with which he had deceived the sentinel, and conducted the whole of this affair.

Thus variously engaged in thought, the travellers passed on silently, for above an hour, a question only being now and then

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asked by Du Pont, concerning the road, or a remark uttered by Annette, respecting objects seen imperfectly in the twilight. At length lights were perceived twinkling on the side of a mountain, and Ludovico had no doubt that they proceeded from the town he had mentioned, while his companions, satisfied by this assurance, sunk again into silence. Annette was the first who interrupted this. "Holy Peter!" said she, "what shall we do for money on our journey? for I know neither I, or my lady, have a single sequin; the Signor took care of that!"

This remark produced a serious enquiry, which ended in as serious an embarrassment, for Du Pont had been rifled of nearly all his money when he was taken prisoner; the remainder he had given to the sentinel, who had enabled him occasionally to leave the prison-chamber; and Ludovico, who had for some time found a difficulty in procuring any part of the wages due to him, had now scarcely cash

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sufficient to procure necessary refreshment at the first town in which they should arrive.

Their poverty was the more distressing, since it would detain them among the mountains, where, even in a town, they could scarcely consider themselves safe from Montoni. The travellers, however, had only to proceed and dare the future; and they continued their way through lonely wilds and dusky vallies, where the over-hanging foliage now admitted and then excluded the moon-light;—wilds so desolate, that they appeared, on the first glance, as if no human being had ever trode them before. Even the road, in which the party were, did but slightly contradict this error, for the high grass and other luxuriant vegetation, with which it was over-grown, told how very seldom the foot of a traveller had passed it.

At length, from a distance, was heard the faint tinkling of a sheep-bell; and, soon after, the bleat of flocks, and the party

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then knew that they were near some human habitation, for the light which Ludovico had fancied to proceed from a town had long been concealed by intervening mountains. Cheered by this hope, they quickened their pace along the narrow pass they were winding, and it opened upon one of those pastoral vallies of the Appenines, which might be painted for a scene of Arcadia, and whose beauty and simplicity are finely contrasted by the grandeur of the snow-topt mountains above.

The morning light, now glimmering in the horizon, shewed faintly, at a little distance, upon the brow of a hill which seemed to peep from "under the opening eye-lids of the morn," the town they were in search of, and which they soon after reached. It was not without some difficulty that they there found a house, which could afford shelter for themselves and their horses; and Emily desired they might not rest longer than was necessary for refreshment. Her appearance excited some sur-

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prise; for she was without a hat, having had time only to throw on her veil before she left the castle, a circumstance that compelled her to regret again the want of money, without which it was impossible to procure this necessary article of dress.

Ludovico, on examining his purse, found it even insufficient to supply present refreshment, and Du Pont, at length, ventured to inform the landlord, whose countenance was simple and honest, of their exact situation, and requested that he would assist them to pursue their journey; a purpose which he promised to comply with, as far as he was able, when he learned that they were prisoners escaping from Montoni, whom he had too much reason to hate. But though he consented to lend them fresh horses to carry them to the next town, he was too poor himself to trust them with money, and they were again lamenting their poverty, when Ludovico, who had been with his tired horses to the hovel which served for a stable, entered the room; half

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frantic with joy, in which his auditors soon participated. On removing the saddle from one of the horses, he had found beneath it a small bag, containing, no doubt, the booty of one of the *Condottieri*, who had returned from a plundering excursion, just before Ludovico left the castle, and whose horse having strayed from the inner court, while his master was engaged in drinking, had brought away the treasure which the ruffian had considered the reward of his exploit.

On counting over this, Du Pont found that it would be more than sufficient to carry them all to France, where he now determined to accompany Emily, whether he should obtain intelligence of his regiment or not; for, though he had as much confidence in the integrity of Ludovico, as his small knowledge of him allowed, he could not endure the thought of committing her to his care for the voyage; nor, perhaps, had he resolution enough to deny himself the dangerous

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pleasure, which he might derive from her presence.

He now consulted them concerning the sea-port to which they should direct their way; and Ludovico, better informed of the geography of the country, said that Leghorn was the nearest port of consequence, which Du Pont knew also to be the most likely of any in Italy to assist their plan, since from thence vessels of all nations were continually departing. Thither, therefore, it was determined, that they should proceed.

Emily, having purchased a little straw-hat, such as was worn by the peasant girls of Tuscany, and some other little necessary equipments for the journey, and the travellers, having exchanged their tired horses for others better able to carry them, re-commenced their joyous way, as the sun was rising over the mountains, and, after travelling through the romantic country, for several hours, began to descend into the vale of Arno. And here Emily.

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beheld all the charms of sylvan and pastoral landscape united, adorned with the elegant villas of the Florentine nobles, and diversified with the various riches of cultivation. How vivid the shrubs, that embowered the slopes, with the woods, that stretched amphitheatrically along the mountains! and, above all, how elegant the outline of these waving Apennines, now softening from the wildness which their interior regions exhibited! At a distance, in the east, Emily discovered Florence, with its towers rising on the brilliant horizon, and its luxuriant plain spreading to the feet of the Apennines, speckled with gardens and magnificent villas, or coloured with groves of orange and lemon, with vines, corn, and plantations of olives and mulberry; while, to the west, the vale opened to the waters of the Mediterranean; so distant, that they were known only by a blueish line that appeared upon the horizon, and by the light marine vapour which just stained the æther above.

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With a full heart, Emily hailed the waves that were to bear her back to her native country, the remembrance of which, however, brought with it a pang; for she had there no home to receive, no parents to welcome her, but was going, like a forlorn pilgrim, to weep over the sad spot, where he, who *was* her father, lay interred. Nor were her spirits cheered, when she considered how long it would probably be before she should see Valancourt, who might be stationed with his regiment in a distant part of France, and that, when they did meet, it would be only to lament the successful villany of Montoni; yet, still she would have felt inexpressible delight at the thought of being once more in the same country with Valancourt, had it even been certain that she could not see him.

The intense heat, for it was now noon, obliged the travellers to look out for a shady recess, where they might rest for a few hours; and the neighbouring thickets,

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abounding with wild grapes, raspberries, and figs, promised them grateful refreshment. Soon after, they turned from the road into a grove, whose thick foliage entirely excluded the sun-beams, and where a spring, gushing from the rock, gave coolness to the air; and, having alighted and turned the horses to graze, Annette and Ludovico ran to gather fruit from the surrounding thickets, of which they soon returned with an abundance. The travellers, seated under the shade of a pine and cypress grove, and on turf enriched with such a profusion of fragrant flowers, as Emily had scarcely ever seen, even among the Pyrenées, took their simple repast, and viewed, with new delight, beneath the dark umbrage of gigantic pines, the glowing landscape stretching to the sea.

Emily and Du Pont gradually became thoughtful and silent; but Annette was all joy and loquacity, and Ludovico was gay, without forgetting the respectful distance

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which was due to his companions. The repast being over, Du Pont recommended Emily to endeavour to sleep, during these sultry hours, and, desiring the servants would do the same, said he would watch the while; but Ludovico wished to spare him this trouble; and Emily and Annette, wearied with travelling, tried to repose, while he stood guard with his trombone.

When Emily, refreshed by slumber, awoke, she found the sentinel asleep on his post and Du Pont awake, but lost in melancholy thought. As the sun was yet too high to allow them to continue their journey, and as it was necessary that Ludovico, after the toils and trouble he had suffered, should finish his sleep, Emily took this opportunity of enquiring by what accident Du Pont became Montoni's prisoner, and he, pleased with the interest this enquiry expressed, and with the excuse it gave him for talking to her of himself, immediately answered her curiosity.

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"I came into Italy, madam," said Du Pont, "in the service of my country. In an adventure among the mountains, our party, engaging with the bands of Montoni, was routed, and I, with a few of my comrades, was taken prisoner. When they told me whose captive I was, the name of Montoni struck me, for I remembered that Madame Cheron, your aunt, had married an Italian of that name, and that you had accompanied them into Italy. It was not, however, till some time after, that I became convinced this was the same Montoni, or learned that you, madam, was under the same roof with myself. I will not pain you by describing what were my emotions upon this discovery, which I owned to a sentinel, whom I had so far won to my interest, that he granted me many indulgences, one of which was very important to me, and somewhat dangerous to himself; but he persisted in refusing to convey any letter, or notice of my situation, to you, for he justly dreaded a disco-

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very, and the consequent vengeance of Montoni. He however enabled me to see you more than once. You are surprised, madam; and I will explain myself. My health and spirits suffered extremely from want of air and exercise, and, at length, I gained so far upon the pity, or the avarice of the man, that he gave me the means of walking on the terrace."

Emily now listened with very anxious attention to the narrative of Du Pont, who proceeded:

"In granting this indulgence, he knew that he had nothing to apprehend from a chance of my escaping from a castle which was vigilantly guarded, and the nearest terrace of which rose over a perpendicular rock: he shewed me also," continued Du Pont, "a door concealed in the cedar wainscot of the apartment were I was confined, which he instructed me how to open; and which, leading into a passage, formed within the thickness of the wall, that extended far along the castle, finally opened

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in an obscure corner of the eastern rampart. I have since been informed, that there are many passages of the same kind concealed within the prodigious walls of that edifice, and which were, undoubtedly, contrived for the purpose of facilitating escapes in time of war. Through this avenue, at the dead of night, I often stole to the terrace, where I walked with the utmost caution, lest my steps should betray me to the sentinels on duty in distant parts; for this end of it, being guarded by high buildings, was not watched by soldiers. In one of these midnight wanderings, I saw light in a casement that overlooked the rampart, and which, I observed, was immediately over my prison-chamber. It occurred to me, that you might be in that apartment, and, with the hope of seeing you, I placed myself opposite to the window."

Emily, remembering the figure that had formerly appeared on the terrace, and which had occasioned her so much anxiety,

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exclaimed, "It was you, then, Monsieur Du Pont, who occasioned me much foolish terror; my spirits were, at that time, so much weakened by long suffering, that they took alarm at every hint." Du Pont, after lamenting that he had occasioned her any apprehension, added: "As I rested on the wall, opposite to your casement, the consideration of your melancholy situation and of my own, called from me involuntary sounds of lamentation, which drew you, I fancy, to the casement; I saw there a person whom I believed to be you. O! I will say nothing of my emotion at that moment; I wished to speak, but prudence restrained me, till the distant footstep of the sentinel compelled me suddenly to quit my station.

"It was some time before I had another opportunity of walking, for I could only leave my prison, when it happened to be the turn of one man to guard me; meanwhile I became convinced from some

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circumstances related by him, that your apartment was over mine, and when again I ventured forth, I returned to your casement, where again I saw you, but without daring to speak. I waved my hand, and you suddenly disappeared; then it was that I forgot my prudence, and yielded to lamentation; again you appeared—you spoke—I heard the well-known accent of your voice! and, at that moment, my discretion would have forsaken me again, had I not heard also the approaching steps of a soldier, when I instantly quitted the place, though not before the man had seen me. He followed down the terrace, and gained so fast upon me, that I was compelled to make use of a stratagem, ridiculous enough, to save myself. I had heard of the superstition of many of these men, and I uttered a strange noise, with a hope that my pursuer would mistake it for something supernatural, and desist from pursuit. Luckily for myself, I succeeded; the man, it seems, was sub-

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ject to fits, and the terror he suffered threw him into one, by which accident I secured my retreat. A sense of the danger I had escaped, and the increased watchfulness which my appearance had occasioned among the sentinels, deterred me ever after from walking on the terace; but, in the stillness of night, I frequently beguiled myself with an old lute, procured for me by a soldier, which I sometimes accompanied with my voice, and sometimes, I will acknowledge, with a hope of making myself heard by you: but it was only a few evenings ago that this hope was answered; I then thought I heard a voice in the wind, calling me; yet, even then, I feared to reply, lest the sentinel at the prison-door should hear me. Was I right, madam, in this conjecture—was it you who spoke?"

"Yes," said Emily, with an involuntary sigh, "you was right indeed."

Du Pont, observing the painful emotions which this question revived, now changed the subject. "In one of my ex-

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cursions through the passage, which I have mentioned, I overheard a singular conversation," said he.

"In the passage!" said Emily, with surprise.

"I heard it in the passage," said Du Pont, "but it proceeded from an apartment adjoining the wall, within which the passage wound, and the shell of the wall was there so thin, and was also somewhat decayed, that I could distinctly hear every word spoken on the other side. It happened that Montoni and his companions were assembled in the room, and Montoni began to relate the extraordinary history of the lady, his predecessor, in the castle. He did, indeed, mention some very surprising circumstances, and whether they were strictly true, his conscience must decide; I fear it will determine against him. But you madam have doubtless heard the report, which he designs should circulate, on the subject of that lady's mysterious fate."

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"I have, sir," replied Emily, "and I perceive that you doubt it."

"I doubted it before the period I am speaking of," rejoined Du Pont;—"but some circumstances, mentioned by Montoni, greatly contributed to my suspicions. The account I then heard almost convinced me that he was a murderer. I trembled for you; the more so that I had heard the guests mention your name in a manner that threatened your repose; and, knowing that the most impious men are often the most superstitious, I determined to try whether I could not awaken their consciences, and awe them from the commission of the crime I dreaded. I listened closely to Montoni, and in the most striking passages of his story I joined my voice, and repeated his last words in a disguised and hollow tone."

"But was you not afraid of being discovered?" said Emily.

"I was not," replied Du Pont; "for I knew, that, if Montoni had been ac-

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quainted with the secret of this passage, he would not have confined me in the apartment to which it led. I knew also, from better authority, that he was ignorant of it. The party, for some time, appeared inattentive to my voice; but, at length, were so much alarmed, that they quitted the apartment; and, having heard Montoni order his servants to search it, I returned to my prison, which was very distant from this part of the passage."—" I remember perfectly to have heard of the conversation you mention," said Emily; " it spread a general alarm among Montoni's people, and I will own I was weak enough to partake of it."

Monsieur Du Pont and Emily thus continued to converse of Montoni, and then of France, and of the plan of their voyage; when Emily told him, that it was her intention to retire to a convent in Languedoc, where she had been formerly treated with much kindness, and from thence to write to her relation Monsieur

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Quesnel, and inform him of her conduct. There she designed to wait till La Vallée should again be her own, whither she hoped her income would some time permit her to return; for Du Pont now taught her to expect, that the estate, of which Montoni had attempted to defraud her, was not irrecoverably lost, and he again congratulated her on her escape from Montoni, who, he had not a doubt, meant to have detained her for life. The possibility of recovering her aunt's estates for Valancourt and herself, lighted up a joy in Emily's heart, such as she had not known for many months: but she endeavoured to conceal this from Monsieur Du Pont, lest it should lead him to a painful remembrance of his rival.

They continued to converse, till the sun was declining in the west, when Du Pont awoke Ludovico, and they set forward on their journey. Gradually descending the lower slopes of the valley, they reached the Arno, and wound along

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its pastoral margin, for many miles, delighted with the scenery around them, and with the remembrances which its classic waves revived. At a distance, they heard the gay song of the peasants among the vineyards, and observed the setting sun tint the waves with yellow lustre, and twilight draw a dusky purple over the mountains, which, at length, deepened into night. Then the *lucciola*, the fire-fly of Tuscany, was seen to flash its sudden sparks among the foliage, while the *cicala*, with its shrill note, became more clamorous than even during the noon-day heat, loving best the hour when the English beetle, with less offensive sound,

> . . . . . "winds
> His small but sullen horn,
> As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
> Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum*."

The travellers crossed the Arno by moon-light, at a ferry, and learning that Pisa was distant only a few miles down the

* Collins.

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river, they wished to have proceeded thither in a boat; but as none could be procured, they set out on their wearied horses for that city. As they approached it, the vale expanded into a plain, variegated with vineyards, corn, olives, and mulberry groves; but it was late before they reached its gates, where Emily was surprised to hear the busy sound of footsteps, and the tones of musical instruments, as well as to see the lively groups that filled the streets, and she almost fancied herself again at Venice; but here was no moonlight sea—no gay gondolas dashing the waves—no *Palladian* palaces, to throw enchantment over the fancy, and lead it into the wilds of fairy story. The Arno rolled through the town, but no music trembled from balconies over its waters; it gave only the busy voices of sailors on board vessels just arrived from the Mediterranean; the melancholy heaving of the anchor, and the boatswain's shrill whistle;—sounds, which, since that period, have there sunk almost

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into silence. They then served to remind Du Pont, that it was probable he might hear of a vessel, sailing soon to France from this port, and thus be spared the trouble of going to Leghorn. As soon as Emily had reached the inn, he went therefore to the quay, to make his enquiries; but, after all the endeavours of himself and Ludovico, they could hear of no bark destined immediately for France, and the travellers returned to their resting-place. Here also, Du Pont endeavoured to learn where his regiment then lay, but could acquire no information concerning it. The travellers retired early to rest, after the fatigues of this day, and, on the following, rose early; and, without pausing to view the celebrated antiquities of the place, or the wonders of its hanging tower, pursued their journey in the cooler hours, through a charming country, rich with wine, and corn, and oil. The Apennines, no longer awful, or even grand, here softened into the beauty of sylvan and pastoral landscape; and Emily, as she de-

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scended them, looked down delighted on Leghorn, and its spacious bay, filled with vessels, and crowned with these beautiful hills.

She was no less surprised and amused, on entering this town, to find it crowded with persons in the dresses of all nations; a scene, which reminded her of a Venetian masquerade, such as she had witnessed at the time of the Carnival; but here was bustle without gaiety, and noise instead of music; while elegance was to be looked for only in the waving outlines of the surrounding hills.

Monsieur Du Pont, immediately on their arrival, went down to the quay, where he heard of several French vessels, and of one that was to sail, in a few days, for Marseilles; from whence another vessel could be procured, without difficulty, to take them across the gulph of Lyons, towards Narbonne, on the coast, not many leagues from which city, he understood the convent was seated to which Emily wished to retire.

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He, therefore, immediately engaged with the captain to take them to Marseilles, and Emily was delighted to hear that her passage to France was secured. Her mind was now relieved from the terror of pursuit; and the pleasing hope of soon seeing her native country—that country which held Valancourt—restored to her spirits a degree of cheerfulness, such as she had scarcely known since the death of her father. At Leghorn also, Du Pont heard of his regiment, and that it had embarked for France; a circumstance which gave him great satisfaction, for he could now accompany Emily thither, without reproach to his conscience, or apprehension of displeasure from his commander. During these days, he scrupulously forbore to distress her by a mention of his passion, and she was compelled to esteem and pity, though she could not love him. He endeavoured to amuse her by shewing the environs of the town, and they often walked together on the sea-shore, and on the

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busy quays, where Emily was frequently interested by the arrival and departure of vessels, participating in the joy of meeting friends, and, sometimes, shedding a sympathetic tear to the sorrow of those that were separating. It was after having witnessed a scene of the latter kind, that she arranged the following stanzas:

THE MARINER.

Soft came the breath of spring; smooth flow'd the tide;
And blue the heaven in its mirror smil'd;
The white sail trembled, swell'd, expanded wide,
The busy sailors at the anchor toil'd.

With anxious friends, that shed the parting tear,
The deck was throng'd—how swift the moments fly!
The vessel heaves, the farewell signs appear;
Mute is each tongue, and eloquent each eye!

The last dread moment comes!—The sailor youth
Hides the big drop, and smiles amid his pain,
Soothes his sad bride, and vows eternal truth,
"Farewell, my love—we shall—shall meet again!"

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Long on the stern, with waving hand, he stood;
The crowded shore sinks, lessening from his view,
As gradual glides the bark along the flood;
His bride is seen no more — " Adieu! — adieu!"

The breeze of Eve moans low, her smile is o'er,
Dim steals her twilight down the crimson'd west;
He climbs the top-most mast, to seek once more
The far-seen coast, where all his wishes rest.

He views its dark line on the distant sky,
And Fancy leads him to his little home;
He sees his weeping love, he hears her sigh,
He soothes her griefs, and tells of joys to come.

Eve yields to night, the breeze to wintry gales,
In one vast shade the seas and shores repose;
He turns his aching eyes, — his spirit fails,
The chill tear falls; — sad to the deck he goes!

The storm of midnight swells, the sails are furl'd,
Deep sounds the lead, but finds no friendly shore;
Fast o'er the waves the wretched bark is hurl'd,
" O Ellen, Ellen! we must meet no more!"

Lightnings, that shew the vast and foamy deep,
The rending thunders, as they onward roll,
The loud, loud winds, that o'er the billows sweep—
Shake the firm nerve, appal the bravest soul!

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Ah! what avails the seamen's toiling care! —
The straining cordage bursts, the mast is riv'n;
The sounds of terror groan along the air,
Then sink afar; — the bark on rocks is driv'n!

Fierce o'er the wreck the whelming waters pass'd,
The helpless crew sunk in the roaring main!
Henry's faint accents trembled in the blast —
"Farewell my love! — we ne'er shall meet again!"

Oft, at the calm and silent evening hour,
When summer-breezes linger on the wave,
A melancholy voice is heard to pour
Its lonely sweetness o'er poor Henry's grave; —

And oft, at midnight, airy strains are heard
Around the grove where Ellen's form is laid;
Nor is the dirge by village-maidens fear'd,
For lovers' spirits guard the holy shade!

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CHAP. X.

. . . . . "Oh! the joy
Of young ideas painted on the mind
In the warm glowing colours fancy spreads
On objects not yet known, when all is new,
And all is lovely!" SACRED DRAMAS.

WE now return to Languedoc and to the mention of Count De Villefort, the nobleman who succeeded to an estate of the Marquis De Villeroi, situated near the monastery of St. Claire. It may be recollected, that this château was uninhabited, when St. Aubert and his daughter were in the neighbourhood, and that the former was much affected on discovering himself to be so near Château-le-Blanc, a place concerning which the good old La Voisin afterwards dropped some hints that had alarmed Emily's curiosity.

It was in the year 1584, the beginning of that, in which St. Aubert died, that Francis Beauveau, Count De Villefort,

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came into possession of the mansions and extensive domain called Château-le Blanc, situated in the province of Languedoc, on the shore of the Mediterranean. This estate, which during some centuries had belonged to his family, now descended to him on the decease of his relative, the Marquis De Villeroi, who had been latterly a man of reserved manners and austere character; circumstances which, together with the duties of his profession, that often called him into the field, and had prevented any degree of intimacy with his cousin, the Count De Villefort. For many years they had known little of each other, and the Count received the first intelligence of his death, which happened in a distant part of France, together with the instruments that gave him possession of the domain of Château-le-Blanc; but it was not till the following year that he determined to visit that estate, when he designed to pass the autumn there. The scenes of Château-le-Blanc often came to his

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remembrance, heightened by the touches which a warm imagination gives to the recollection of early pleasures; for, many years before, in the life-time of the Marchioness, and at that age when the mind is particularly sensible to impressions of gaiety and delight, he had once visited this spot, and, though he had passed a long intervening period amidst the vexations and tumults of public affairs, which too frequently corrode the heart and vitiate the taste, the shades of Languedoc and the grandeur of its distant scenery had never been remembered by him with indifference.

During many years, the château had been abandoned by the late Marquis, and, being inhabited only by an old steward and his wife, had been suffered to fall much into decay. To superintend the repairs, that would be requisite to make it a comfortable residence, had been a principal motive with the Count for passing the autumnal months in Languedoc; and neither

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the remonstrances or the tears of the Countess, for on urgent occasions she could weep, were powerful enough to overcome his determination. She prepared, therefore, to obey the command which she could not conquer, and to resign the gay assemblies of Paris — where her beauty was generally unrivalled, and won the applause to which her wit had but feeble claim — for the twilight canopy of woods, the lonely grandeur of mountains, and the solemnity of gothic halls, and of long, long galleries, which echoed only the solitary step of a domestic, or the measured clink that ascended from the great clock — the ancient monitor of the hall below. From these melancholy expectations she endeavoured to relieve her spirits by recollecting all that she had ever heard concerning the joyous vintage of the plains of Languedoc! but there, alas! no airy forms would bound to the gay melody of Parisian dances, and a view of the rustic festivities of peasants could afford little

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pleasure to a heart, in which even the feelings of ordinary benevolence had long since decayed under the corruptions of luxury.

The Count had a son and a daughter, the children of a former marriage, who he designed should accompany him to the south of France; Henri, who was in his twentieth year, was in the French service; and Blanche, who was not yet eighteen, had been hitherto confined to the convent, where she had been placed immediately on her father's second marriage. The present Countess, who had neither sufficient ability or inclination to superintend the education of her daughter-in-law, had advised this step; and the dread of superior beauty had since urged her to employ every art that might prevail on the Count to prolong the period of Blanche's seclusion; it was, therefore, with extreme mortification that she now understood he would no longer submit on this subject, yet it afforded her some consolation to consider, that, though

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the Lady Blanche would emerge from the convent, the shades of the country would, for some time, veil her beauty from the public eye.

On the morning which commenced the journey, the postillions stopped at the convent, by the Count's order, to take up Blanche, whose heart beat with delight, at the prospect of novelty and freedom now before her. As the time of her departure drew nigh, her impatience had increased; and the last night, during which she counted every note of every hour, had appeared the most tedious of any she had ever known. The morning light, at length, dawned; the matin-bell rang; she heard the nuns descending from their chambers, and she started from a sleepless pillow, to welcome the day which was to emancipate her from the severities of a cloister, and introduce her to a world, where pleasure was ever smiling, and goodness ever blessed—where, in short, nothing but pleasure and goodness reigned! When

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the bell of the great gate rang, and the sound was followed by that of carriage-wheels, she ran, with a palpitating heart, to her lattice, and, perceiving her father's carriage in the court below, danced, with airy steps, along the gallery, where she was met by a nun with a summons from the abbess. In the next moment she was in the parlour, and in the presence of the Countess, who now appeared to her as an angel that was to lead her into happiness. But the emotions of the Countess, on beholding her, was not in unison with those of Blanche, who had never appeared so lovely as at this moment, when her countenance, animated by the lightning smile of joy, glowed with the beauty of happy innocence.

After conversing for a few minutes with the abbess, the Countess rose to go. This was the moment which Blanche had anticipated with such eager expectation, the summit from which she looked down upon the fairy-land of happiness, and surveyed

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all its enchantment;—was it a moment, then, for tears of regret? Yet it was so. She turned, with an altered and dejected countenance, to her young companions, who were come to bid her farewell, and wept! Even my lady abbess, so stately and so solemn, she saluted with a degree of sorrow, which an hour before she would have believed it impossible to feel, and which may be accounted for by considering how reluctantly we all part, even with unpleasing objects, when the separation is consciously for ever. Again she kissed the poor nuns, and then followed the Countess from that spot with tears, which she expected to leave only with smiles.

But the presence of her father, and the variety of objects on the road, soon engaged her attention, and dissipated the shade which tender regret had thrown upon her spirits. Inattentive to a conversation which was passing between the Countess and a Mademoiselle Bearn, her friendly Blanche sat, lost in pleasing reverie,

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as she watched the clouds floating silently along the blue expanse, now veiling the sun and stretching their shadows along the distant scene, and then disclosing all his brightness. The journey continued to give Blanche inexpressible delight, for new scenes of nature were every instant opening to her view, and her fancy became stored with gay and beautiful imagery.

It was on the evening of the seventh day that the travellers came within view of Château-le-Blanc, the romantic beauty of whose situation strongly impressed the imagination of Blanche, who observed, with sublime astonishment, the Pyrenean mountains, which had been seen only at a distance during the day, now rising within a few leagues, with their wild cliffs and immense precipices, which the evening clouds, floating round them, now disclosed, and again veiled. The setting rays, that tinged their snowy summits with a roseate hue, touched their lower

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points with various colouring, while the blueish tint, that pervaded their shadowy recesses, gave the strength of contrast to the splendor of light. The plains of Languedoc, blushing with the purple vine, and diversified with groves of mulberry, almond, and olives, spread far to the north and the east: to the south appeared the Mediterranean, clear as crystal, and blue as the heavens it reflected, bearing on its bosom vessels, whose white sails caught the sun-beams, and gave animation to the scene. On a high promontory, washed by the waters of the Mediterranean, stood her father's mansion, almost secluded from the eye by woods of intermingled pine, oak, and chesnut, which crowned the eminence, and sloped towards the plains, on one side; while, on the other, they extended to a considerable distance along the sea-shores.

As Blanche drew nearer, the gothic features of this ancient mansion successively appeared—first an embattled turret rising

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above the trees — then the broken arch of an immense gate-way retiring beyond them; and she almost fancied herself approaching a castle, such as is often celebrated in early story, where the knights look out from the battlements on some champion below, who, clothed in black armour, comes, with his companions, to rescue the fair lady of his love from the oppression of his rival; a sort of legends, to which she had once or twice obtained access in the library of her convent, that, like many others, belonging to the monks, was stored with these relics of romantic fiction.

The carriages stopped at a gate which led into the domain of the château, but which was now fastened; and the great bell, that had formerly served to announce the arrival of strangers, having long since fallen from its station, a servant climbed over a ruined part of the adjoining wall, to give notice to those within of the arrival of their lord.

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As Blanche leaned from the coach window, she resigned herself to the sweet and gentle emotions which the hour and the scenery awakened. The sun had now left the earth, and twilight began to darken the mountains; while the distant waters, reflecting the blush that still glowed in the west, appeared like a line of light skirting the horizon. The low murmur of waves, breaking on the shore, came in the breeze, and, now and then, the melancholy dashing of oars was feebly heard from a distance. She was suffered to indulge her pensive mood, for the thoughts of the rest of the party were silently engaged upon the subjects of their several interests. Meanwhile, the Countess, reflecting with regret upon the gay parties she had left at Paris, surveyed, with disgust, what she thought the gloomy woods and solitary wildness of the scene; and, shrinking from the prospect of being shut up in an old castle, was prepared to meet every object with displeasure. The feelings of Henri were

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somewhat similar to those of the Countess; he gave a mournful sigh to the delights of the capital, and to the remembrance of a lady, who, he believed, had engaged his affections, and who had certainly fascinated his imagination; but the surrounding country, and the mode of life on which he was entering, had, for him, at least, the charm of novelty, and his regret was softened by the gay expectations of outh.

The gates being at length unbarred, the carriage moved slowly on, under spreading chesnuts that almost excluded the remains of day, following what had been formerly a road, but which now, overgrown with luxuriant vegetation, could be traced only by the boundary, formed by trees, on either side, and which wound for near half a mile among the woods before it reached the château. This was the very avenue that St. Aubert and Emily had formerly entered, on their first arrival in the neighbourhood, with the hope of finding a house

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that would receive them for the night, and had so abruptly quitted, on perceiving the wildness of the place, and a figure which the postillion had fancied was a robber.

"What a dismal place is this!" exclaimed the Countess, as the carriage penetrated the deeper recesses of the woods. "Surely, my Lord, you do not mean to pass all the autumn in this barbarous spot! One ought to bring hither a cup of the waters of Lethe, that the remembrance of pleasanter scenes may not heighten, at least, the natural dreariness of these."

"I shall be governed by circumstances, madam," said the Count: "this barbarous spot was inhabited by my ancestors."

The carriage now stopped at the château, where, at the door of the great hall, appeared the old steward and the Parisian servants, who had been sent to prepare the château, waiting to receive their lord. Lady Blanche now perceived that the edifice was not built entirely in the gothic

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style, but that it had additions of a more modern date; the large and gloomy hall, however, into which she now entered, was entirely gothic; and sumptuous tapestry, which it was now too dark to distinguish, hung upon the walls, and depictured scenes from some of the ancient Provençal romances. A vast gothic window, embroidered with *clematis* and eglantine, that ascended to the south, led the eye, now that the casements were thrown open, through this verdant shade, over a sloping lawn, to the tops of dark woods that hung upon the brow of the promontory. Beyond appeared the waters of the Mediterranean, stretching far to the south and to the east, where they were lost in the horizon; while to the north-east they were bounded by the luxuriant shores of Languedoc and Provence, enriched with wood, and gay with vines and sloping pasture; and, to the south-west, by the majestic Pyrenées, now fading from the eye beneath the gradual gloom.

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Blanche, as she crossed the hall, stopped a moment to observe this lovely prospect, which the evening twilight obscured, yet did not conceal. But she was quickly awakened from the complacent delight which this scene had diffused upon her mind, by the Countess, who, discontented with every object around, and impatient for refreshment and repose, hastened forward to a large parlour, whose cedar wainscot, narrow pointed casements, and dark ceiling of carved cypress wood, gave it an aspect of peculiar gloom, which the dingy green velvet of the chairs and couches, fringed with tarnished gold, had once been designed to enliven.

While the Countess enquired for refreshment, the Count, attended by his son, went to look over some part of the château; and Lady Blanche reluctantly remained to witness the discontent and ill humour of her step-mother.

"How long have you lived in this desolate place?" said her ladyship to the old

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house-keeper, who came to pay her duty. "Above twenty years, your ladyship, on the next feast of St. Jerome."

"How happened it that you have lived here so long, and almost alone, too? I understood that the château had been shut up for some years?"

"Yes, madam, it was for many years after my late lord, the Count, went to the wars; but it is above twenty years since I and my husband came into his service. The place is so large, and has of late been so lonely, that we were lost in it, and, after some time, we went to live in a cottage at the end of the woods, near some of the tenants, and came to look after the château every now and then. When my lord returned to France from the wars, he took a dislike to the place, and never came to live here again, and so he was satisfied with our remaining at the cottage. Alas—alas! how the château is changed from what it once was! What delight my late lady used to take in it! I well re-

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member when she came here a bride, and how fine it was. Now, it has been neglected so long, and is gone into such decay! I shall never see those days again!"

The Countess appearing to be somewhat offended by the thoughtless simplicity with which the old woman regretted former times, Dorothée added—"But the château will now be inhabited, and cheerful again; not all the world could tempt me to live in it alone."

"Well, the experiment will not be made, I believe," said the Countess, displeased that her own silence had been unable to awe the loquacity of this rustic old housekeeper, now spared from further attendance by the entrance of the Count, who said he had been viewing part of the château, and found that it would require considerable repairs, and some alterations, before it would be perfectly comfortable as a place of residence. "I am sorry to hear it, my lord," replied the Countess. "And why sorry, madam?" "Because

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the place will ill repay your trouble; and were it even a paradise, it would be insufferable at such a distance from Paris."

The Count made no reply, but walked abruptly to a window. "There are windows, my lord, but they neither admit entertainment or light; they shew only a scene of savage nature."

"I am at a loss, madam," said the Count, "to conjecture what you mean by savage nature. Do those plains, or those woods, or that fine expanse of water, deserve the name?"

"Those mountains certainly do, my lord," rejoined the Countess, pointing to the Pyrenées; "and this château, though not a work of rude nature, is, to my taste, at least, one of savage art." The Count coloured highly. "This place, madam, was the work of my ancestors," said he, "and you must allow me to say, that your present conversation discovers neither good taste or good manners." Blanche, now shocked at an altercation which appeared

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to be increasing to a serious disagreement, rose to leave the room, when her mother's woman entered it, and the Countess, immediately desiring to be shewn to her own apartment, withdrew, attended by Mademoiselle Bearn.

Lady Blanche, it being not yet dark, took this opportunity of exploring new scenes, and, leaving the parlour, she passed from the hall into a wide gallery, whose walls were decorated by marble pilasters, which supported an arched roof, composed of a rich mosaïc work. Through a distant window, that seemed to terminate the gallery, were seen the purple clouds of evening, and a landscape, whose features, thinly veiled in twilight, no longer appeared distinctly, but, blended into one grand mass, stretched to the horizon, coloured only with a tint of solemn grey.

The gallery terminated in a saloon, to which the window she had seen through an open door belonged; but the increasing dusk permitted her only an imperfect view

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of this apartment, which seemed to be magnificent, and of modern architecture; though it had been either suffered to fall into decay, or had never been properly finished. The windows, which were numerous and large, descended low, and afforded a very extensive, and, what Blanche's fancy represented to be, a very lovely prospect; and she stood for some time surveying the grey obscurity, and depicturing imaginary woods and mountains, vallies and rivers, on this scene of night; her solemn sensations rather assisted, than interrupted, by the distant bark of a watch-dog, and by the breeze, as it trembled upon the light foliage of the shrubs. Now and then appeared for a moment, among the woods, a cottage light; and, at length, was heard, afar off, the evening bell of a convent, dying on the air. When she withdrew her thoughts from these subjects of fanciful delight, the gloom and silence of the saloon somewhat awed her; and, having sought the door of the gallery, and

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pursued, for a considerable time, a dark passage, she came to a hall, but one totally different from that she had formerly seen. By the twilight, admitted through an open portico, she could just distinguish this apartment to be of very light and airy architecture, and that it was paved with white marble, pillars of which supported the roof, that rose into arches built in the Moorish style. While Blanche stood on the steps of this portico, the moon rose over the sea, and gradually disclosed, in partial light, the beauties of the eminence on which she stood, whence a lawn, now rude and overgrown with high grass, sloped to the woods, that, almost surrounding the château, extended in a grand sweep down the southern sides of the promontory, to the very margin of the ocean. Beyond the woods, on the north side, appeared a long tract of the plains of Languedoc; and, to the east, the landscape she had before dimly seen, with the towers of a monastery, illumined by the moon, rising over dark groves.

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The soft and shadowy tint that overspread the scene, the waves undulating in the moon-light, and their low and measured murmurs on the beach, were circumstances that united to elevate the unaccustomed mind of Blanche to enthusiasm.

" And have I lived in this glorious world so long," said she, " and never till now beheld such a prospect—never experienced these delights! Every peasant girl, on my father's domain, has viewed from her infancy the face of nature; has ranged at liberty her romantic wilds, while I have been shut in a cloister from the view of these beautiful appearances, which were designed to enchant all eyes, and awaken all hearts. How can the poor nuns and friars feel the full fervour of devotion, if they never see the sun rise or set? Never, till this evening, did I know what true devotion is; for never before did I see the sun sink below the vast earth! To-morrow, for the first time in my life, I will see it rise. O who would live in

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Paris, to look upon black walls and dirty streets, when, in the country, they might gaze on the blue heavens and all the green earth!

This enthusiastic soliloquy was interrupted by a rustling noise in the hall; and, while the loneliness of the place made her sensible to fear, she thought she perceived something moving between the pillars. For a moment she continued silently observing it, till, ashamed of her ridiculous apprehensions, she recollected courage enough to demand who was there. "O my young lady, is it you?" said the old housekeeper, who was come to shut the windows; "I am glad it is you." The manner in which she spoke this, with a faint breath, rather surprised Blanche, who said, "You seemed frightened, Dorothée; what is the matter?"

"No, not frightened, ma'amselle," replied Dorothée, hesitating, and trying to appear composed; "but I am old, and—a little matter startles me." The Lady

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Blanche smiled at the distinction. "I am glad that my lord the Count is come to live at the château, ma'amselle," continued Dorothée; "for it has been many a year deserted, and dreary enough; now the place will look a little as it used to do, when my poor lady was alive." Blanche enquired how long it was since the Marchioness died? "Alas! my lady!" replied Dorothée, "so long—that I have ceased to count the years! The place, to my mind, has mourned ever since, and I am sure my lord's vassals have! But you have lost yourself, ma'amselle—shall I shew you to the other side of the château?"

Blanche enquired how long this part of the edifice had been built. "Soon after my lord's marriage, ma'am," replied Dorothée. "The place was large enough without this addition, for many rooms of the old building were even then never made use of, and my lord had a princely household too; but he thought the ancient

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mansion gloomy, and gloomy enough it is!" Lady Blanche now desired to be shewn to the inhabited part of the château; and, as the passages were entirely dark, Dorothée conducted her along the edge of the lawn to the opposite side of the edifice, where, a door opening into the great hall, she was met by Mademoiselle Bearn. "Where have you been so long?" said she, "I had begun to think some wonderful adventure had befallen you, and that the giant of this enchanted castle, or the ghost which no doubt haunts it, had conveyed you through a trap-door into some subterranean vault, whence you was never to return."

"No," replied Blanche, laughingly, "you seem to love adventures so well, that I leave them for you to achieve."

"Well, I am willing to achieve them, provided I am allowed to describe them."

"My dear Mademoiselle Bearn," said Henri, as he met her at the door of the

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parlour, " no ghost of these days would be so savage as to impose silence on you. Our ghosts are more civilized than to condemn a lady to a purgatory severer even than their own, be it what it may."

Mademoiselle Bearn replied only by a laugh; and, the Count now entering the room, supper was served, during which he spoke little, frequently appeared to be abstracted from the company, and more than once remarked, that the place was greatly altered since he had last seen it. " Many years have intervened since that period," said he; " and, though the grand features of the scenery admit of no change, they impress me with sensations very different from those I formerly experienced."

" Did these scenes, sir," said Blanche, " ever appear more lovely than they do now? To me this seems hardly possible." The Count, regarding her with a melancholy smile, said, " They once were as

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delightful to me, as they are now to you; the landscape is not changed, but time has changed me; from my mind the illusion which gave spirit to the colouring of nature, is fading fast! If you live, my dear Blanche, to revisit this spot, at the distance of many years, you will, perhaps, remember and understand the feelings of your father."

Lady Blanche, affected by these words, remained silent; she looked forward to the period which the Count anticipated, and considering, that he, who now spoke, would then probably be no more, her eyes, bent to the ground, were filled with tears. She gave her hand to her father, who, smiling affectionately, rose from his chair, and went to a window to conceal his emotion.

The fatigues of the day made the party separate at an early hour, when Blanche retired through a long oak gallery to her chamber, whose spacious and lofty walls,

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high antiquated casements, and, what was the effect of these, its gloomy air, did not reconcile her to its remote situation in this ancient building. The furniture, also, was of ancient date; the bed was of blue damask, trimmed with tarnished gold lace, and its lofty tester rose in the form of a canopy, whence the curtains descended, like those of such tents as are sometimes represented in old pictures, and, indeed, much resembling those exhibited on the faded tapestry with which the chamber was hung. To Blanche, every object here was matter of curiosity; and, taking the light from her woman to examine the tapestry, she perceived that it represented scenes from the walls of Troy, though the almost colourless worsted now mocked the glowing actions they once had painted. She laughed at the ludicrous absurdity she observed, till recollecting that the hands which had wove it, were, like the poet, whose thoughts of fire they had attempted

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to express, long since mouldered into dust, a train of melancholy ideas passed over her mind, and she almost wept.

Having given her woman a strict injunction to awaken her before sun-rise, she dismissed her; and then, to dissipate the gloom which reflection had cast upon her spirits, opened one of the high casements, and was again cheered by the face of living nature. The shadowy earth, the air, and ocean—all was still. Along the deep serene of the heavens a few light clouds floated slowly, through whose skirts the stars now seemed to tremble, and now to emerge with purer splendour. Blanche's thoughts arose involuntarily to the Great Author of the sublime objects she contemplated, and she breathed a prayer of finer devotion than any she had ever uttered beneath the vaulted roof of a cloister. At this casement she remained till the glooms of midnight were stretched over the prospect. She then retired to

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her pillow, and, " with gay visions of to-morrow," to those sweet slumbers which health and happy innocence only know.

" To-morrow, to fresh woods and pastures new."

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CHAP. XI.

" What transport to retrace our early plays,
Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied,
The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
Of the wild brooks!"

THOMSON.

BLANCHE'S slumbers continued, till long after the hour which she had so impatiently anticipated; for her woman, fatigued with travelling, did not call her till breakfast was nearly ready. Her disappointment, however, was instantly forgotten, when, on opening the casement, she saw, on one hand, the wide sea sparkling in the morning rays, with its stealing sails and glancing oars; and, on the other, the fresh woods, the plains far-stretching, and the blue mountains, all glowing with the splendour of the day.

As she inspired the pure breeze, health

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spread a deeper blush upon her countenance, and pleasure danced in her eyes.

"Who could first invent convents!" said she, "and who could first persuade people to go into them? and to make religion a pretence, too, where all that should inspire it is so carefully shut out! God is best pleased with the homage of a grateful heart; and when we view his glories, we feel most grateful. I never felt so much devotion, during the many dull years I was in the convent, as I have done in the few hours that I have been here, where I need only look on all around me—to adore God in my inmost heart!"

Saying this, she left the window, bounded along the gallery, and, in the next moment, was in the breakfast-room, where the Count was already seated. The cheerfulness of a bright sun-shine had dispersed the melancholy glooms of his reflections, a pleasant smile was on his countenance, and he spoke in an enlivening voice to Blanche, whose heart echoed back the

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tones. Henri, and soon after the Countess, with Mademoiselle Bearn, appeared, and the whole party seemed to acknowledge the influence of the scene; even the Countess was so much re-animated as to receive the civilities of her husband with complacency, and but once forgot her good humour, which was when she asked whether they had any neighbours who were likely to make *this barbarous spot* more tolerable, and whether the Count believed it possible for her to exist here without some amusement?

Soon after breakfast the party dispersed; the Count, ordering his steward to attend him in the library, went to survey the condition of his premises, and to visit some of his tenants; Henri hastened with alacrity to the shore to examine a boat that was to bear them on a little voyage in the evening, and to superintend the adjustment of a silk awning; while the Countess, attended by Mademoiselle Bearn, retired to an apartment on the modern side of the château,

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which was fitted up with airy elegance; and, as the windows opened upon balconies that fronted the sea, she was there saved from a view of the *horrid* Pyrenées. Here, while she reclined on a sofa, and, casting her languid eyes over the ocean, which appeared beyond the wood-tops, indulged in the luxuries of *ennui*, her companion read aloud a sentimental novel on some fashionable system of philosophy, for the Countess was herself somewhat of a *philosopher*, especially as to *infidelity*; and among a certain circle her opinions were waited for with impatience, and received as doctrines.

The Lady Blanche, meanwhile, hastened to indulge, amidst the wide wood-walks around the château, her new enthusiasm, where, as she wandered under the shades, her gay spirits gradually yielded to pensive complacency. Now she moved with solemn steps beneath the gloom of thickly interwoven branches, where the fresh dew still hung upon every flower that peeped from

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among the grass; and now tripped sportively along the path on which the sunbeams darted and the checquered foliage trembled—where the tender greens of the beech, the acacia, and the mountain ash, mingling with the solemn tints of the cedar, the pine, and cypress, exhibited as fine a contrast of colouring as the majestic oak and oriental plane did of form, to the feathery lightness of the cork-tree and the waving grace of the poplar.

Having reached a rustic seat within a deep recess of the woods, she rested a-while, and, as her eyes caught, through a distant opening, a glimpse of the blue waters of the Mediterranean, with the white sail gliding on its bosom, or of the broad mountain glowing beneath the mid-day sun, her mind experienced somewhat of that exquisite delight which awakens the fancy and leads to poetry. The hum of bees alone broke the stillness around her, as, with other insects of various hues, they sported gaily in the shade, or sipped sweets from

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the fresh flowers; and, while Blanche watched a butterfly flitting from bud to bud, she indulged herself in imagining the pleasures of its short day, till she had composed the following stanzas:

THE BUTTERFLY TO HIS LOVE.

What bow'ry dell, with fragrant breath,
Courts thee to stay thy airy flight:
Nor seek again the purple heath,
So oft the scene of gay delight?

Long I've watch'd i' the lily's bell,
Whose whiteness stole the morning's beam;
No flutt'ring sounds thy coming tell,
No waving wings, at distance, gleam.

But fountain fresh, nor breathing grove,
Nor sunny mead, nor blossom'd tree,
So sweet as lily's cell shall prove,—
The bow'r of constant love and me.

When April buds begin to blow,
The prim-rose, and the hare-bell blue,
That on the verdant moss-bank grow,
With violet cups, that weep in dew;

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When wanton gales breathe through the shade,
And shake the blooms, and steal their sweets,
And swell the song of ev'ry glade,
I range the forest's green retreats:

There, through the tangled wood-walks play,
Where no rude urchin paces near,
Where sparely peeps the sultry day,
And light dews freshen all the air.

High on a sun-beam oft I sport,
O'er bower and fountain, vale and hill;
Oft ev'ry blushing flow'ret court,
That hangs its head o'er winding rill.

But these I'll leave to be thy guide,
And shew thee where the jasmine spreads
Her snowy leaf, where Mayflow'rs hide,
And rose-buds rear their peeping heads.

With me the mountain's summit scale,
And taste the wild-thyme's honey'd bloom,
Whose fragrance, floating on the gale,
Oft leads me to the cedar's gloom.

Yet, yet, no sound comes in the breeze!
What shade thus dares to tempt thy stay?
Once, me alone thou wish'd to please,
And with me only thou wouldst stray.

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But, while thy long delay I mourn,
And chide the sweet shades for their guile,
Thou may'st be true, and they forlorn,
And fairy favours court thy smile.

The tiny queen of fairy-land,
Who knows thy speed, hath sent thee far,
To bring, or ere the night-watch stand,
Rich essence for her shadowy car;

Perchance her acorn-cups to fill
With nectar from the Indian rose,
Or gather, near some haunted rill,
May-dews, that lull to sleep Love's woes:

Or, o'er the mountains, bade thee fly,
To tell her fairy love to speed,
When ev'ning steals upon the sky,
To dance along the twilight mead.

But now I see thee sailing low,
Gay as the brightest flow'rs of spring,
Thy coat of blue and jet I know,
And well thy gold and purple wing.

Borne on the gale, thou com'st to me;
O! welcome, welcome to my home!
In lily's cell we'll live in glee,
Together o'er the mountains roam!

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When Lady Blanche returned to the château, instead of going to the apartment of the Countess, she amused herself with wandering over that part of the edifice which she had not yet examined, of which the most ancient first attracted her curiosity; for, though what she had seen of the modern was gay and elegant, there was something in the former more interesting to her imagination. Having passed up the great staircase and through the oak gallery, she entered upon a long suit of chambers, whose walls were either hung with tapestry or wainscoted with cedar, the furniture of which looked almost as ancient as the rooms themselves; the spacious fire-places, where no mark of social cheer remained, presented an image of cold desolation; and the whole suit had so much the air of neglect and desertion, that it seemed as if the venerable persons, whose portraits hung upon the walls, had been the last to inhabit them.

On leaving these rooms, she found her-

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self in another gallery, one end of which was terminated by a back staircase, and the other by a door that seemed to communicate with the north side of the château, but which being fastened, she descended the staircase, and, opening a door in the wall, a few steps down, found herself in a small square room that formed part of the west turret of the castle. Three windows presented each a separate and beautiful prospect; that to the north overlooking Languedoc; another to the west, the hills ascending towards the Pyrenées, whose awful summits crowned the landscape; and a third, fronting the south, gave the Mediterranean, and a part of the wild shores of Rousillon, to the eye.

Having left the turret and descended the narrow staircase, she found herself in a dusky passage, where she wandered, unable to find her way, till impatience yielded to apprehension, and she called for assistance. Presently steps approached, and light glimmered through a door at the

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other extremity of the passage, which was opened with caution by some person, who did not venture beyond it, and whom Blanche observed in silence, till the door was closing, when she called aloud, and, hastening towards it, perceived the old housekeeper.

"Dear ma'amselle! is it you?" said Dorothée, "How could you find your way hither?" Had Blanche been less occupied by her own fears, she would probably have observed the strong expressions of terror and surprise on Dorothée's countenance, who now led her through a long succession of passages and rooms, that looked as if they had been uninhabited for a century, till they reached that appropriated to the housekeeper, where Dorothée entreated she would sit down and take refreshment. Blanche accepted the sweetmeats offered to her, mentioned her discovery of the pleasant turret, and her wish to appropriate it to her own use. Whether Dorothée's taste was not so sensible to the

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self in another gallery, one end of which was terminated by a back staircase, and the other by a door that seemed to communicate with the north side of the château, but which being fastened, she descended the staircase, and, opening a door in the wall, a few steps down, found herself in a small square room that formed part of the west turret of the castle. Three windows presented each a separate and beautiful prospect; that to the north overlooking Languedoc; another to the west, the hills ascending towards the Pyrenées, whose awful summits crowned [illegible] and a third, fronting [illegible] Mediterranean, [illegible] shores of Roussi[illegible]

Having l[illegible] the narrow[illegible] a dusky [illegible] able [illegible] ech[illegible]

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beauties of landscape as her young lady's, or that the constant view of lovely scenery had deadened it, she forbore to praise the subject of Blanche's enthusiasm, which, however, her silence did not repress. To Lady Blanche's enquiry, of whither the door she had found fastened at the end of the gallery led, she replied, that it opened to a suite of rooms, which had not been entered during many years; "For," added she, "my late lady died in one of them, and I could never find in my heart to go into them since."

Blanche, though she wished to see these chambers, forbore, on observing that Dorothée's eyes were filled with tears, to ask her to unlock them, and, soon after, went to dress for dinner, at which the whole party met in good spirits and good humour, except the Countess, whose vacant mind, overcome by the languor of idleness, would neither suffer her to be happy herself, or to contribute to the happiness of others. Mademoiselle Bearn, attempt-

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ing to be witty, directed her *badinage* against Henri, who answered because he could not well avoid it, rather than from any inclination to notice her, whose liveliness sometimes amused, but whose conceit and insensibility often disgusted him,

The cheerfulness with which Blanche rejoined the party vanished, on her reaching the margin of the sea; she gazed with apprehension upon the immense expanse of waters, which, at a distance, she had beheld only with delight and astonishment, and it was by a strong effort that she so far overcame her fears as to follow her father into the boat.

As she silently surveyed the vast horizon, bending round the distant verge of the ocean, an emotion of sublimest rapture struggled to overcome a sense of personal danger. A light breeze played on the water, and on the silk awning of the boat, and waved the foliage of the receding

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woods, that crowned the cliffs for many miles, and which the Count surveyed with the pride of concious property, as well as with the eye of taste.

At some distance, among these woods, stood a pavilion, which had once been the scene of social gaiety, and which its situation still made one of romantic beauty. Thither, the Count had ordered coffee and other refreshment to be carried, and thither the sailors now steered their course, following the windings of the shore round many a woody promontory and circling bay; while the pensive tones of horns and other wind instruments, played by the attendants in a distant boat, echoed among the rocks, and died along the waves. Blanche had now subdued her fears; a delightful tranquillity stole over her mind, and held her in silence; and she was too happy even to remember the convent, or her former sorrows, as subjects of comparison with her present felicity.

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The Countess felt less unhappy than she had done since the moment of her leaving Paris; for her mind was now under some degree of restraint; she feared to indulge its wayward humours, and even wished to recover the Count's good opinion. On his family, and on the surrounding scene, he looked with tempered pleasure and benevolent satisfaction, while his son exhibited the gay spirits of youth, anticipating new delights, and regretless of those that were passed.

After near an hour's rowing, the party landed, and ascended a little path, overgrown with vegetation. At a little distance from the point of the eminence, within the shadowy recess of the woods, appeared the pavilion, which Blanche perceived, as she caught a glimpse of its portico between the trees, to be built of variegated marble. As she followed the Countess, she often turned her eyes with rapture towards the ocean, seen beneath the dark foliage far below, and from thence upon the deep

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woods, whose silence and impenetrable gloom awakened emotions more solemn, but scarcely less delightful.

The pavilion had been prepared, as far as was possible, on a very short notice, for the recepton of its visitors; but the faded colours of its painted walls and ceiling, and the decayed drapery of its once magnificent furniture, declared how long it had been neglected, and abandoned to the empire of the changing seasons. While the party partook of a collation of fruit and coffee, the horns, placed in a distant part of the woods, where an echo sweetened and prolonged their melancholy tones, broke softly on the stillness of the scene. This spot seemed to attract even the admiration of the Countess, or, perhaps, it was merely the pleasure of planning furniture and decorations, that made her dwell so long on the necessity of repairing and adorning it; while the Count, never happier than when he saw her mind engaged by natural and simple objects, acquiesced

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in all her designs concerning the pavilion. The paintings on the walls and coved ceiling were to be renewed; the canopies and sofas were to be light green damasks; marble statues of wood-nymphs, bearing on their heads baskets of living flowers, were to adorn the recesses between the windows, which, descending to the ground, were to admit to every part of the room, (and it was of octagonal form) the various landscape. One window opened upon a romantic glade, where the eye roved among woody recesses, and the scene was bounded only by a lengthened pomp of groves; from another, the woods receding, disclosed the distant summits of the Pyrenées; a third fronted an avenue, beyond which the grey towers of Château-le-Blanc, and a picturesque part of its ruin, were seen partially among the foliage; while a fourth gave, between the trees, a glimpse of the green pastures and villages that diversify the banks of the Aude. The Mediterranean, with the bold cliffs that overlooked

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its shores, were the grand objects of a fifth window, and the others gave, in different points of view, the wild scenery of the woods.

After wandering for some time in these, the party returned to the shore, and embarked; and the beauty of the evening tempting them to extend their excursion, they proceeded further up the bay. A dead calm had succeeded the light breeze that wafted them hither, and the men took to their oars. Around, the waters were spread into one vast expanse of polished mirror, reflecting the grey cliffs and feathery woods that overhung its surface, the glow of the western horizon, and the dark clouds that came slowly from the east. Blanche loved to see the dipping oars imprint the water, and to watch the spreading circles they left, which gave a tremulous motion to the reflected landscape, without destroying the harmony of its features.

Above the darkness of the woods, her

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eye now caught a cluster of high towers, touched with the splendour of the setting rays; and, soon after, the horns being then silent, she heard the faint swell of choral voices from a distance.

"What voices are those upon the air?" said the Count, looking round and listening;—but the strain had ceased. "It seemed to be a vesper hymn which I have often heard in my convent," said Blanche.

"We are near the monastery, then," observed the Count; and the boat soon after doubling a lofty head-land, the monastery of St. Claire appeared, seated near the margin of the sea; where the cliffs suddenly sinking, formed a low shore within a small bay, almost encircled with woods, among which partial features of the edifice were seen—the great gate and gothic window of the hall, the cloisters, and the side of a chapel more remote; while a venerable arch, which had once led to a part of the fabric now demolished, stood a majestic ruin, detached from the

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main building, beyond which appeared a grand perspective of the woods. On the grey walls the moss had fastened, and round the pointed windows of the chapel the ivy and the briony hung in many a fantastic wreath.

All without was silent and forsaken; but while Blanche gazed with admiration on this venerable pile, whose effect was heightened by the strong lights and shadows thrown athwart it by a cloudy sunset, a sound of many voices, slowly chanting, arose from within. The Count bade his men rest on their oars. The monks were singing the hymn of vespers, and some female voices mingled with the strain; which rose, by soft degrees, till the high organ and the choral sounds swelled into full and solemn harmony. The strain soon after dropped into sudden silence, and was renewed in a low and still more solemn key; till, at length, the holy chorus died away, and was heard no more.—Blanche sighed; tears trembled in her

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eyes; and her thoughts seemed wafted with the sounds to heaven. While a rapt stillness prevailed in the boat, a train of friars and then of nuns, veiled in white, issued from the cloisters, and passed under the shade of the woods to the main body of the edifice.

The Countess was the first of her party to awaken from this pause of silence.

"These dismal hymns and friars make one quite melancholy," said she; "twilight is coming on: pray let us return, or it will be dark before we get home."

The Count, looking up, now perceived that the twilight of evening was anticipated by an approaching storm. In the east a tempest was collecting: a heavy gloom came on, opposing and contrasting the glowing splendour of the setting sun; the clamorous sea-fowl skimmed in fleet circles upon the surface of the sea, dipping their light pinions in the wave as they fled away in search of shelter. The boatmen pulled hard at their oars. But the

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thunder that now muttered at a distance, and the heavy drops that began to dimple the water, made the Count determine to put back to the monastery for shelter; and the course of the boat was immediately changed. As the clouds approached the west, their lurid darkness changed to a deep ruddy glow, which, by reflexion, seemed to fire the tops of the woods and the shattered towers of the monastery.

The appearance of the heavens alarmed the Countess and Mademoiselle Bearn; whose expressions of apprehension distressed the Count, and perplexed his men; while Blanche continued silent — now agitated with fear, and now with admiration, as she viewed the grandeur of the clouds, and their effect on the scenery, and listened to the long, long peals of thunder that rolled through the air.

The boat having reached the lawn before the monastery, the Count sent a servant to announce his arrival, and to entreat shelter of the Superior; who, soon

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after, appeared at the great gate attended by several monks; while the servant returned with a message, expressive at once of hospitality and pride—but of pride disguised in submission. The party immediately disembarked; and, having hastily crossed the lawn—for the shower was now heavy—were received at the gate by the Superior; who, as they entered, stretched forth his hands and gave his blessing; and they passed into the great hall, where the lady abbess waited, attended by several nuns, clothed like herself, in black, and veiled in white. The veil of the abbess was, however, thrown half back, and discovered a countenance, whose chaste dignity was sweetened by the smile of welcome with which she addressed the Countess; whom she led, with Blanche and Mademoiselle Bearn, into the convent parlour, while the Count and Henri were conducted by the Superior to the refectory.

The Countess, fatigued and discontented, received the politeness of the abbess with

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careless haughtiness, and had followed her with indolent steps to the parlour; over which the painted casements, and wainscot of larch wood, threw, at all times, a melancholy shade, and where the gloom of evening now loured almost to darkness.

While the lady abbess ordered refreshment, and conversed with the Countess, Blanche withdrew to a window; the lower panes of which being without painting, allowed her to observe the progress of the storm over the Mediterranean; whose dark waves that had so lately slept now came boldly swelling, in long succession, to the shore, where they burst in white foam, and threw up a high spray over the rocks. A red sulphureous tint overspread the long line of clouds that hung above the western horizon; beneath whose dark skirts the sun looking out, illumined the distant shores of Languedoc, as well as the tufted summits of the nearer woods, and shed a partial gleam on the western waves. The rest of the scene was in deep gloom, ex-

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cept where a sun-beam, darting between the clouds, glanced on the white wings of the sea-fowl that circled high among them, or touched the swelling sail of a vessel which was seen labouring in the storm. Blanche, for some time, anxiously watched the progress of the bark as it threw the waves in foam around it; and, as the lightnings flashed, looked to the opening heavens with many a sigh for the fate of the poor mariners.

The sun at length set, and the heavy clouds which had long impended, dropped over the splendour of his course: the vessel, however, was yet dimly seen; and Blanche continued to observe it, till the quick succession of flashes, lighting up the gloom of the whole horizon, warned her to retire from the window, and she joined the abbess; who, having exhausted all her topics of conversation with the Countess, had now leisure to notice her.

But their discourse was interrupted by tremendous peals of thunder; and the

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bell of the monastery soon after ringing out, summoned the inhabitants to prayer. As Blanche passed the windows she gave another look to the ocean; where, by the momentary flash that illumined the vast body of the waters, she distinguished the vessel she had observed before, amidst a sea of foam, breaking the billows — the mast now bowing to the waves and then rising high in air.

She sighed fervently as she gazed, and then followed the lady abbess and the Countess to the chapel. Meanwhile, some of the Count's servants having gone by land to the château for carriages, returned soon after vespers had concluded; when, the storm being somewhat abated, the Count and his family returned home, Blanche was surprised to discover how much the windings of the shore had deceived her concerning the distance of the château from the monastery; whose vesper-bell she had heard on the preceding evening from the windows of the west saloon,

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and whose towers she would also have seen from thence, had not twilight veiled them.

On their arrival at the château, the Countess, affecting more fatigue than she really felt, withdrew to her apartment, and the Count, with his daughter and Henri, went to the supper-room; where they had not been long, when they heard, in a pause of the gust, a firing of guns; which the Count understanding to be signals of distress from some vessel in the storm, went to a window, that opened towards the Mediterranean, to observe further; but the sea was now involved in utter darkness, and the loud howlings of the tempest had again overcome every other sound. Blanche, remembering the bark which she had before seen, now joined her father, with trembling anxiety. In a few moments, the report of guns was again borne along the wind, and as suddenly wafted away: a tremendous burst of thunder followed; and, in the flash that had preceded it, and which seemed to quiver over the

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whole surface of the waters, a vessel was discovered, tossing amidst the white foam of the waves, at some distance from the shore. Impenetrable darkness again involved the scene; but soon a second flash showed the bark, with one sail unfurled, driving towards the coast. Blanche hung upon her father's arm, with looks full of the agony of united terror and pity; which were unnecessary to awaken the heart of the Count, who gazed upon the sea with a piteous expression, and, perceiving that no boat could live in the storm, forbore to send one; but he gave orders to his people to carry torches out upon the cliffs—hoping they might prove a kind of beacon to the vessel, or, at least, warn the crew of the rocks they were approaching. While Henri went out to direct on what part of the cliffs the lights should appear, Blanche remained with her father at the window, catching, every now and then, as the lightnings flashed, a glimpse of the vessel; and she soon saw, with reviving hope, the

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torches flaming on the blackness of night, and, as they waved over the cliffs, casting a red gleam on the gasping billows. When the firing of guns was repeated, the torches were tossed high in the air, as if answering the signal, and the firing was then redoubled; but though the wind bore the sound away, she fancied, as the lightnings glanced, that the vessel was much nearer the shore.

The Count's servants were now seen, running to and fro, on the rocks—some, venturing almost to the point of the crags, and bending over, held out their torches fastened to long poles; while others, whose steps could be traced only by the course of the lights, descended the steep and dangerous path that wound to the margin of the sea, and, with loud halloos, hailed the mariners; whose shrill whistle, and then feeble voices, were heard, at intervals, mingling with the storm. Sudden shouts from the people on the rocks increased the anxiety of Blanche to an almost intolerable degree: but her suspense, concerning the

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fate of the mariners, was soon over, when Henri, running breathless into the room, told that the vessel was anchored in the bay below, but in so shattered a condition that it was feared she would part before the crew could disembark. The Count immediately gave orders for his own boats to assist in bringing them to shore, and that such of these unfortunate strangers as could not be accommodated in the adjacent hamlet, should be entertained at the château. Among the latter, were Emily St. Aubert, Monsieur Du Pont, Ludovico, and Annette; who, having embarked at Leghorn, and reached Marseilles, were from thence crossing the Gulf of Lyons when this storm overtook them. They were received by the Count with his usual benignity; who, though Emily wished to have proceeded immediately to the monastery of St. Claire, would not allow her to leave the château that night; and, indeed, the terror and fatigue she had suffered, would scarcely have permitted her to go farther.

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In Monsieur Du Pont the Count discovered an old acquaintance, and much joy and congratulation passed between them; after which Emily was introduced by name to the Count's family, whose hospitable benevolence dissipated the little embarrassment which her situation had occasioned her; and the party were soon seated at the supper-table. The unaffected kindness of Blanche, and the lively joy she expressed on the escape of the strangers, for whom her pity had been so much interested, gradually revived Emily's languid spirits; and Du Pont, relieved from his terrors for her and for himself, felt the full contrast, between his late situation on a dark and tremendous ocean, and his present one, in a cheerful mansion, where he was surrounded with plenty, elegance, and smiles of welcome.

Annette, meanwhile, in the servants' hall, was telling of all the dangers she had encountered, and congratulating herself so heartily upon her own and Ludovico's

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escape, and on her present comforts, that she often made all that part of the château ring with merriment and laughter. Ludovico's spirits were as gay as her own; but he had discretion enough to restrain them, and tried to check hers, though in vain; till her laughter, at length, ascended to *my lady's* chamber; who sent to inquire what occasioned so much uproar in the château, and to command silence.

Emily withdrew early to seek the repose she so much required; but her pillow was long a sleepless one. On this her return to her native country, many interesting remembrances were awakened; all the events and sufferings she had experienced since she quitted it, came in long succession to her fancy, and were chased only by the image of Valancourt; with whom to believe herself once more in the same land, after they had been so long and so distantly separated, gave her emotions of indescribable joy; but which afterwards yielded to anxiety and apprehension,

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when she considered the long period that had elapsed since any letter had passed between them, and how much might have happened in this interval to affect her future peace. But the thought that Valancourt might be now no more, or, if living, might have forgotten her, was so very terrible to her heart, that she would scarcely suffer herself to pause upon the possibility. She determined to inform him, on the following day, of her arrival in France; which it was scarcely possible he could know but by a letter from herself; and, after soothing her spirits with the hope of soon hearing that he was well, and unchanged in his affections, she, at length, sunk to repose.

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CHAP. XII.

" Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia, silver bright,
In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
With Freedom by my side, and soft-ey'd Melancholy."

GRAY.

THE Lady Blanche was so much interested for Emily, that, upon hearing she was going to reside in the neighbouring convent, she requested the Count would invite her to lengthen her stay at the château. " And you know, my dear sir," added Blanche, " how delighted I shall be with such a companion; for, at present, I have no friend to walk or to read with, since Mademoiselle Bearn is my mamma's friend only."

The Count smiled at the youthful simplicity with which his daughter yielded to first impressions; and, though he chose to warn her of their danger, he silently applauded the benevolence that could thus readily expand in confidence to a stranger.

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He had observed Emily with attention on the preceding evening, and was as much pleased with her as it was possible he could be with any person on so short an acquaintance; the mention made of her by Mons. Du Pont had also given him a favourable impression of Emily; but, extremely cautious as to those whom he introduced to the intimacy of his daughter, he determined, on hearing that the former was no stranger at the convent of St. Claire, to visit the abbess; and, if her account corresponded with his wish, to invite Emily to pass some time at the château. On this subject he was influenced by a consideration of the Lady Blanche's welfare, still more than by either a wish to oblige her, or to befriend the orphan Emily; for whom, however, he felt considerably interested.

On the following morning Emily was too much fatigued to appear; but Mons. Du Pont was at the breakfast-table when the Count entered the room; who pressed

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him, as his former acquaintance, and the son of a very old friend, to prolong his stay at the château—an invitation which Du Pont willingly accepted, since it would allow him to be near Emily; and, though he was not conscious of encouraging a hope that she would ever return his affection, he had not fortitude enough to attempt, at present, to overcome it.

Emily, when she was somewhat recovered, wandered with her new friend over the grounds belonging to the château, as much delighted with the surrounding views, as Blanche, in the benevolence of her heart, had wished: from thence she perceived, beyond the woods, the towers of the monastery, and remarked that it was to this convent she designed to go.

"Ah!" said Blanche with surprise, "I am but just released from a convent, and would you go into one? If you could know what pleasure I feel in wandering here, at liberty, and in seeing the sky, and the fields, and the woods all around me,

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I think you would not." Emily, smiling at the warmth with which the Lady Blanche spoke, observed, that she did not mean to confine herself to a convent for life.

"No, you may not intend it now," said Blanche; "but you do not know to what the nuns may persuade you to consent: I know how kind they will appear, and how happy, for I have seen too much of their art."

When they returned to the château, Lady Blanche conducted Emily to her favourite turret: and from thence they rambled through the ancient chambers, which Blanche had visited before. Emily was amused by observing the structure of these apartments, and the fashion of their old but still magnificent furniture, and by comparing them with those of the Castle of Udolpho, which were yet more antique and grotesque. She was also interested by Dorothée the housekeeper, who attended them; whose appearance was almost as an-

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tique as the objects around her, and who seemed no less interested by Emily; on whom she frequently gazed with so much deep attention, as scarcely to hear what was said to her.

While Emily looked from one of the casements, she perceived, with surprise, some objects that were familiar to her memory—the fields and woods, with the gleaming brook, which she had passed with La Voisin, one evening, soon after the death of Mons. St. Aubert, in her way from the monastery to the cottage; and she now knew this to be the château which he had then avoided, and concerning which he had dropped some remarkable hints.

Shocked by this discovery, yet scarcely knowing why, she mused for some time in silence, and remembered the emotion which her father had betrayed on finding himself so near this mansion, and some other circumstances of his conduct, that now greatly interested her. The music,

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too, which she had formerly heard, and respecting which La Voisin had given such an odd account, occurred to her; and, desirous of knowing more concerning it, she asked Dorothée whether it returned at midnight, as usual, and whether the musician had yet been discovered.

"Yes, ma'amselle," replied Dorothée; "that music is still heard; but the musician has never been found out, nor ever will, I believe; though there are some people who can guess."

"Indeed;" said Emily: "then why do they not pursue the inquiry?"

"Ah, young lady! inquiry enough has been made—but who can pursue a spirit?"

Emily smiled, and, remembering how lately she had suffered herself to be led away by superstition, determined now to resist its contagion; yet, in spite of her efforts, she felt awe mingled with her curiosity on this subject; and Blanche, who had hitherto listened in silence, now

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inquired what this music was, and how long it had been heard.

"Ever since the death of my lady, madam," replied Dorothée.

"Why, the place is not haunted, surely?" said Blanche, between jesting and seriousness.

"I have heard that music almost ever since my dear lady died," continued Dorothée, "and never before then. But that is nothing to some things I could tell of."

"Do, pray, tell them, then," said Lady Blanche, now more in earnest than in jest: "I am much interested; for I have heard sister Henriette, and sister Sophie, in the convent, tell of such strange appearances which they themselves had witnessed!"—

"You never heard, my lady, I suppose, what made us leave the château, and go and live in a cottage," said Dorothée.

"Never!" replied Blanche, with impatience.

"Nor the reason that my lord the Mar-

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quis"—— Dorothée checked herself, hesitated, and then endeavoured to change the topic; but the curiosity of Blanche was too much awakened to suffer the subject thus easily to escape her, and she pressed the old housekeeper to proceed with her account: upon whom, however, no entreaties could prevail; and it was evident, that she was alarmed for the imprudence into which she had already betrayed herself.

"I perceive," said Emily, smiling; "that all old mansions are haunted: I am lately come from a place of wonders; but unluckily, since I left it, I have heard almost all of them explained."

Blanche was silent; Dorothée looked grave and sighed; and Emily felt herself still inclined to believe more of the wonderful than she chose to acknowledge. Just then she remembered the spectacle she had witnessed in a chamber of Udolpho, and, by an odd kind of coincidence, the alarming words that had accidentally

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met her eye in the MS. papers which she had destroyed in obedience to the command of her father; and she shuddered at the meaning they seemed to impart, almost as much as at the horrible appearance disclosed by the black veil.

The Lady Blanche, meanwhile, unable to prevail with Dorothée to explain the subject of her late hints, had desired, on reaching the door that terminated the gallery, and which she found fastened on the preceding day, to see the suit of rooms beyond. "Dear young lady," said the housekeeper, "I have told you my reason for not opening them: I have never seen them since my dear lady died; and it would go hard with me to see them now. Pray, madam, do not ask me again."

"Certainly I will not," replied Blanche, "if that is really your objection."

"Alas! it is," said the old woman; "we all loved her well, and I shall always grieve for her. Time runs round!—it is now many years since she died; but I re-

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member every thing that happened then, as if it was but yesterday. Many things that have passed of late years are gone quite from my memory; while those so long ago I can see as if in a glass." She paused; but afterwards, as they walked up the gallery, added of Emily, "This young lady sometimes brings the late Marchioness to my mind: I can remember when she looked just as blooming, and very like her when she smiles. Poor lady! how gay she was when she first came to the château!"

"And was she not gay afterwards?" said Blanche.

Dorothée shook her head; and Emily observed her, with eyes strongly expressive of the interest she now felt. "Let us sit down in this window," said the Lady Blanche, on reaching the opposite end of the gallery: "and pray, Dorothée, if it is not painful to you, tell us something more about the Marchioness. I should like to look into the glass you spoke of just now,

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and see a few of the circumstances which you say often pass over it."

"No, my lady," replied Dorothée; "if you knew as much as I do, you would not; for you would find there a dismal train of them. I often wish I could shut them out, but they will rise to my mind. I see my dear lady on her death-bed — her very look — and remember all she said: — it was a terrible scene!"

"Why was it so terrible?" said Emily, with emotion.

"Ah, dear young lady! is not death always terrible?" replied Dorothée.

To some further inquiries of Blanche, Dorothée was silent; and Emily, observing the tears in her eyes, forbore to urge the subject, and endeavoured to withdraw the attention of her young friend to some object in the gardens; where the Count, with the Countess and Monsieur Du Pont, appearing, they went down to join them.

When he perceived Emily, he advanced to meet her, and presented her to the

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Countess in a manner so benign, that it recalled most powerfully to her mind the idea of her late father; and she felt more gratitude to him than embarrassment towards the Countess; who, however, received her with one of those fascinating smiles which her caprice sometimes allowed her to assume, and which was now the result of a conversation the Count had held with her concerning Emily. Whatever this might be, or whatever had passed in his conversation with the lady abbess, whom he had just visited, esteem and kindness were strongly apparent in his manner when he addressed Emily; who experienced that sweet emotion which arises from the consciousness of possessing the approbation of the good; for to the Count's worth she had been inclined to yield her confidence almost from the first moment in which she had seen him.

Before she could finish her acknowledgements for the hospitality she had received and mention her design of going imme-

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diately to the convent, she was interrupted by an invitation to lengthen her stay at the château; which was pressed by the Count and the Countess, with an appearance of such friendly sincerity, that, though she much wished to see her old friends at the monastery, and to sigh once more over her father's grave, she consented to remain a few days at the château.

To the abbess, however, she immediately wrote, mentioning her arrival in Languedoc, and her wish to be received into the convent as a boarder: she also sent letters to Monsieur Quesnel, and to Valancourt, whom she merely informed of her arrival in France; and, as she knew not where the latter might be stationed, she directed her letter to his brother's seat in Gascony.

In the evening, Lady Blanche and Mons. De Pont walked with Emily to the cottage of La Voisin; which she had now a melancholy pleasure in approaching; for time had softened her grief for

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the loss of St. Aubert, though it could not annihilate it, and she felt a soothing sadness in indulging the recollections which this scene recalled. La Voisin was still living, and seemed to enjoy, as much as formerly, the tranquil evening of a blameless life. He was sitting at the door of his cottage, watching some of his grandchildren playing on the grass before him, and now and then, with a laugh or a commendation, encouraging their sports. He immediately recollected Emily, whom he was much pleased to see; and she was as rejoiced to hear that he had not lost one of his family since her departure.

"Yes, ma'amselle," said the old man, "we all live merrily together still, thank God! and I believe there is not a happier family to be found in Languedoc than ours."

Emily did not trust herself in the chamber where St. Aubert died; and, after half an hour's conversation with La Voisin and his family, she left the cottage.

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During these the first days of her stay at Château-le-Blanc, she was often affected, by observing the deep but silent melancholy which at times stole over Du Pont; and Emily, pitying the self-delusion which disarmed him of the will to depart, determined to withdraw herself as soon as the respect she owed the Count and Countess De Villefort would permit. The dejection of his friend soon alarmed the anxiety of the Count; to whom Du Pont at length confided the secret of his hopeless affection; which, however, the former could only commiserate, though he secretly determined to befriend his suit, if an opportunity of doing so should ever occur. Considering the dangerous situation of Du Pont, he but feebly opposed his intention of leaving Château-le-Blanc on the following day, but drew from him a promise of a longer visit when he could return with safety to his peace. Emily herself, though she could not encourage his affection, esteemed him, both for the many vir-

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tues he possessed, and for the services she had received from him; and it was not without tender emotions of gratitude and pity, that she now saw him depart for his family-seat in Gascony; while he took leave of her with a countenance so expressive of love and grief, as to interest the Count more warmly in his cause than before.

In a few days, Emily also left the château; but not before the Count and Countess had received her promise to repeat her visit very soon; and she was welcomed by the abbess with the same maternal kindness she had formerly experienced, and by the nuns with much expression of regard. The well-known scenes of the convent occasioned her many melancholy recollections; but with these were mingled others, that inspired gratitude for having escaped the various dangers that had pursued her since she quitted it, and for the good which she yet possessed; and, though she once more wept over her father's grave with

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tears of tender affection, her grief was softened from its former acuteness.

Some time after her return to the monastery, she received a letter from her uncle, Mons. Quesnel, in answer to information that she had arrived in France, and to her inquiries concerning such of her affairs as he had undertaken to conduct during her absence, especially as to the period for which La Vallée had been let; whither it was her wish to return, if it should appear that her income would permit her to do so. The reply of Mons. Quesnel was cold and formal as she expected, expressing neither concern for the evils she had suffered, nor pleasure that she was now removed from them; nor did he allow the opportunity to pass of reproving her for her rejection of Count Morano, whom he affected still to believe a man of honour and fortune; nor of vehemently declaiming against Montoni, to whom he had always, till now, felt himself to be inferior. On Emily's pecuniary concerns he was not

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very explicit: he informed her, however, that the term for which La Vallée had been engaged was nearly expired; but, without inviting her to his own house, added, that her circumstances would by no means allow her to reside there, and earnestly advised her to remain, for the present, in the convent of St. Claire. To her inquiries respecting poor old Theresa, her late father's servant, he gave no answer. In the postscript to his letter, Monsieur Quesnel mentioned M. Motteville, in whose hands the late St. Aubert had placed the chief of his personal property, as being likely to arrange his affairs nearly to the satisfaction of his creditors, and that Emily would recover much more of her fortune than she had formerly reason to expect. The letter also inclosed to Emily an order upon a merchant at Narbonne for a small sum of money.

The tranquillity of the monastery, and the liberty she was suffered to enjoy, in

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wandering among the woods and shores of this delightful province, gradually restored her spirits to their natural tone; except that anxiety would sometimes intrude concerning Valancourt, as the time approached when it was possible that she might receive an answer to her letter.

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CHAP. XIII.

"As when a wave, that from a cloud impends,
And, swell'd with tempests, on the ship descends:
White are the decks with foam; the winds, aloud,
Howl o'er the masts, and sing through ev'ry shroud:
Pale, trembling, tir'd, the sailors freeze with fears;
And instant death on ev'ry wave appears."

POPE'S HOMER.

THE Lady Blanche, meanwhile, who was left much alone, became impatient for the company of her new friend, whom she wished to observe sharing in the delight she received from the beautiful scenery around. She had now no person to whom she could express her admiration, and communicate her pleasures; no eye that sparkled to her smile, or countenance that reflected her happiness; and she became spiritless and pensive. The Count, observing her dissatisfaction, readily yielded to her entreaties, and reminded Emily of her promised visit. But the silence of

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Valancourt, which was now prolonged far beyond the period when a letter might have arrived from Estuviere, oppressed Emily with severe anxiety, and, rendering her averse to society, she would willingly have deferred her acceptance of this invitation, till her spirits should be relieved. The Count and his family, however, pressed to see her; and, as the circumstances that prompted her wish for solitude could not be explained, there was an appearance of caprice in her refusal, which she could not persevere in, without offending the friends whose esteem she valued. At length, therefore, she returned upon a second visit to Château-le-Blanc. Here the friendly manner of Count de Villefort encouraged Emily to mention to him her situation respecting the estates of her late aunt, and to consult him on the means of recovering them. He had little doubt that the law would decide in her favour; and, advising her to apply to it, offered, first, to write to an advocate at Avignon,

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on whose opinion he thought he could rely. His kindness was gratefully accepted by Emily; who, soothed by the courtesy she daily experienced, would have been once more happy, could she have been assured of Valancourt's welfare and unaltered affection. She had now been above a week at the château without receiving intelligence of him; and, though she knew, that, if he was absent from his brother's residence, it was scarcely probable her letter had yet reached him, she could not forbear to admit doubts and fears that destroyed her peace. Again she would consider of all that might have happened in the long period since her first seclusion at Udolpho; and her mind was sometimes so overwhelmed with an apprehension that Valancourt was no more, or that he lived no longer for her, that the company even of Blanche became intolerably oppressive; and she would sit alone in her apartment for hours together, when the engagements of the family allowed her to do so without incivility.

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In one of these solitary hours, she unlocked a little box, which contained some letters of Valancourt, with some drawings she had sketched during her stay in Tuscany; the latter of which were no longer interesting to her; but, in the letters, she now, with melancholy indulgence, meant to retrace the tenderness that had so often soothed her, and rendered her, for a moment, insensible of the distance which separated her from the writer. But their effect was now changed: the affection they expressed appealed so forcibly to her heart when she considered that it had, perhaps, yielded to the powers of time and absence, and even the view of the hand-writing recalled so many painful recollections, that she found herself unable to go through the first she had opened; and sat musing, with her cheek resting on her arm, and tears stealing from her eyes, when old Dorothée entered the room, to inform her that dinner would be ready an hour before the usual time. Emily started on per-

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ceiving her, and hastily put up the papers; but not before Dorothée had observed both her agitation and her tears.

"Ah, ma'amselle!" said she, "you, who are so young,—have you reason for sorrow?"

Emily tried to smile, but was unable to speak.

"Alas, dear young lady! when you come to my age, you will not weep at trifles;—and surely you have nothing serious to grieve you?"

"No, Dorothée; nothing of any consequence," replied Emily. Dorothee, now stooping to pick up something that had dropped from among the papers, suddenly exclaimed,—"Holy Mary! what is it I see?" and then, trembling, sat down in a chair that stood by the table.

"What is it you do see?" said Emily, alarmed by her manner, and looking round the room.

"It is herself!" said Dorothée; "her

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very self! just as she looked a little before she died!"

Emily, still more alarmed, began now to fear that Dorothée was seized with sudden phrensy; but entreated her to explain herself.

"That picture!" said she; "where did you find it, lady?—it is my blessed mistress herself!"

She laid on the table the miniature which Emily had long ago found among the papers her father had enjoined her to destroy, and over which she had once seen him shed such tender and affecting tears; and, recollecting all the various circumstances of his conduct, that had long perplexed her, her emotions increased to an excess which deprived her of all power to ask the questions she trembled to have answered; and she could only inquire, whether Dorothée was certain the picture resembled the late Marchioness?

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"O, ma'amselle!" said she, "how came it to strike me so, the instant I saw it, if it was not my lady's likeness? Ah!" added she, taking up the miniature, "these are her own blue eyes—looking so sweet and so mild! and there is her very look, such as I have often seen it, when she had sat thinking for a long while; and then the tears would often steal down her cheeks—but she never would complain! It was that look, so meek, as it were, and resigned, that used to break my heart, and make me love her so!"

"Dorothée!" said Emily, solemnly, "I am interested in the cause of that grief—more so, perhaps, than you may imagine; and I entreat that you will no longer refuse to indulge my curiosity—it is not a common one."

As Emily said this, she remembered the papers with which the picture had been found, and had scarcely a doubt that they had concerned the Marchioness de Villeroi: but with this supposition came a

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scruple, whether she ought to inquire further on a subject which might prove to be the same that her father had so carefully endeavoured to conceal. Her curiosity concerning the Marchioness, powerful as it was, it is probable she would now have resisted, as she had formerly done on unwarily observing the few terrible words in the papers, which had never since been erased from her memory, had she been certain that the history of that lady was the subject of those papers, or, that such simple particulars only as it was probable Dorothée could relate, were included in her father's command. What was known to her, could be no secret to many other persons; and since it appeared very unlikely that St. Aubert should attempt to conceal what Emily might learn by ordinary means, she at length concluded, that, if the papers had related to the story of the Marchioness, it was not those circumstances of it which Dorothée could disclose that he had thought suf-

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ficiently important to wish to have concealed: she therefore no longer hesitated to make the inquiries that might lead to the gratification of her curiosity.

"Ah, ma'amselle!" said Dorothée, "it is a sad story, and cannot be told now;—but, what am I saying?—I never will tell it. Many years have passed since it happened; and I never loved to talk of the Marchioness, to any body but my husband. He lived in the family, at that time, as well as myself, and he knew many particulars from me which nobody else did; for I was about the person of my lady in her last illness, and saw and heard as much, or more, than my lord himself. Sweet saint! how patient she was! When she died, I thought I could have died with her!"

"Dorothee," said Emily, interrupting her, "what you shall tell, you may depend upon it, shall never be disclosed by me. I have, I repeat it, particular reasons for wishing to be informed on this

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subject, and am willing to bind myself, in the most solemn manner, never to mention what you shall wish me to conceal."

Dorothée seemed surprised at the earnestness of Emily's manner, and, after regarding her for some moments in silence, said,—"Young lady! that look of yours pleads for you—it is so like my dear mistress's, that I can almost fancy I see her before me: if you were her daughter, you could not remind me of her more. But dinner will be ready: had you not better go down?"

"You will first promise to grant my request," said Emily.

"And ought not you first to tell me, ma'amselle, how this picture fell into your hands, and the reasons you say you have for curiosity about my lady?"

"Why, no, Dorothée," replied Emily, recollecting herself; "I have also particular reasons for observing silence on these subjects, at least till I know further; and, remember, I do not promise ever to speak

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upon them: therefore, do not let me induce you to satisfy my curiosity, from an expectation that I shall gratify yours. What I may judge proper to conceal, does not concern myself alone, or I should have less scruple in revealing it: let a confidence in my honour alone persuade you to disclose what I request."

"Well, lady!" replied Dorothée, after a long pause, during which her eyes were fixed upon Emily, "you seem so much interested—and this picture, and that face of yours, make me think you have some reason to be so,—that I will trust you, and tell some things, that I never told before to any body but my husband, though there are people who have suspected as much. I will tell you the particulars of my lady's death, too, and some of my own suspicions; but you must first promise me, by all the saints"——

Emily, interrupting her, solemnly promised never to reveal what should be confided to her, without Dorothée's consent.

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" But there is the horn, ma'amselle, sounding for dinner," said Dorothée: " I must be gone."

" When shall I see you again?" inquired Emily.

Dorothée mused, and then replied, " Why, madam, it may make people curious, if it is known I am so much in your apartment, and that I should be sorry for; so I will come when I am least likely to be observed. I have little leisure in the day, and I shall have a good deal to say; so, if you please, ma'am, I will come when the family are all in bed."

" That will suit me very well," replied Emily: " Remember, then, to-night"—

" Aye, that is well remembered," said Dorothée: " I fear I cannot come to-night, madam; for there will be the dance of the vintage, and it will be late before the servants go to rest; for, when they once set in to dance, they will keep it up, in the cool of the air, till morning: at least, it used to be so in my time."

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"Ah! is it the dance of the vintage?" said Emily, with a deep sigh, remembering that it was on the evening of this festival, in the preceding year, that St. Aubert and herself had arrived in the neighbourhood of Château-le-Blanc. She paused a moment, overcome by the sudden recollection; and then, recovering herself, added—"But this dance is in the open woods; you, therefore, will not be wanted, and can easily come to me."

Dorothée replied that she had been accustomed to be present at the dance of the vintage, and she did not wish to be absent now; "but if I can get away, madam, I will," said she.

Emily then hastened to the dining-room; where the Count conducted himself with the courtesy which is inseparable from true dignity, and of which the Countess frequently practised little, though her manner to Emily was an exception to her usual habit. But, if she retained few of the ornamental virtues, she cherished other qua-

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lities, which she seemed to consider invaluable: she had dismissed the grace of modesty; but then she knew perfectly well how to manage the stare of assurance: her manners had little of the tempered sweetness which is necessary to render the female character interesting; but she could occasionally throw into them an affectation of spirits, which seemed to triumph over every person who approached her. In the country, however, she generally affected an elegant languor, that persuaded her almost to faint, when her favourite read to her a story of fictitious sorrow; but her countenance suffered no change when living objects of distress solicited her charity, and her heart beat with no transport to the thought of giving them instant relief: she was a stranger to the highest luxury of which, perhaps, the human mind can be sensible—for her benevolence had never yet called smiles upon the face of misery.

In the evening, the Count, with all his family, except the Countess and Mademoi-

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selle Bearn, went to the woods to witness the festivity of the peasants. The scene was in a glade; where the trees, opening, formed a circle round the turf they highly overshadowed. Between their branches, vines, loaded with ripe clusters, were hung in gay festoons; beneath, were tables, with fruit, wine, cheese, and other rural fare, and seats for the Count and his family. At a little distance were benches for the elder peasants; few of whom, however, could forbear to join the jocund dance, which began soon after sun-set; when several of sixty tripped it with almost as much glee and airy lightness as those of sixteen.

The musicians, who sat carelessly on the grass, at the foot of a tree, seemed inspired by the sound of their own instruments, which were chiefly flutes and a kind of long guitar. Behind stood a boy, flourishing a tamborine, and dancing a solo, except that, as he sometimes gaily tossed the instrument, he tripped among

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the other dancers; when his antic gestures called forth a broader laugh, and heightened the rustic spirit of the scene.

The Count was highly delighted with the happiness he witnessed, to which his bounty had largely contributed; and the Lady Blanche joined the dance with a young gentleman of her father's party. Du Pont requested Emily's hand; but her spirits were too much depressed to permit her to engage in the present festivity, which called to her remembrance that of the preceding year, when St. Aubert was living, and of the melancholy scenes which had immediately followed it.

Overcome by these recollections, she, at length, left the spot, and walked slowly into the woods; where the softened music, floating at a distance, soothed her melancholy mind. The moon threw a mellow light among the foliage; the air was balmy and cool; and Emily, lost in thought, strolled on, without observing whither, till she perceived the sounds sinking afar off,

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and an awful stillness around her, except that, sometimes, the nightingale beguiled the silence with

"Liquid notes, that close the eye of day."

At length she found herself near the avenue which, on the night of her father's arrival, Michael had attempted to pass in search of a house which was still nearly as wild and desolate as it had then appeared; for the Count had been so much engaged in directing other improvements, that he had neglected to give orders concerning this extensive approach; and the road was yet broken, and the trees overloaded with their own luxuriance.

As she stood surveying it, and remembering the emotions which she had formerly suffered there, she suddenly recollected the figure that had been seen stealing among the trees, and which had returned no answer to Michael's repeated calls; and she experienced somewhat of the fear that had then assailed her, for it did not appear improbable that these deep

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woods were occasionally the haunt of banditti: she therefore turned back; and was hastily pursuing her way to the dancers, when she heard steps approaching from the avenue; and, being still beyond the call of the peasants on the green, for she could neither hear their voices or their music, she quickened her pace: but the persons following gained fast upon her; and, at length, distinguishing the voice of Henri, she walked leisurely till he came up. He expressed some surprise at meeting her so far from the company; and, on her saying that the pleasant moonlight had beguiled her to walk farther than she intended, an exclamation burst from the lips of his companion, and she thought she heard Valancourt speak! It was, indeed, he! and the meeting was such as may be imagined, between persons so affectionate, and so long separated, as they had been.

In the joy of these moments, Emily forgot all her past sufferings; and Valancourt seemed to have forgotten that any

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person but Emily existed; while Henri was a silent and astonished spectator of the scene.

Valancourt asked a thousand questions, concerning herself and Montoni, which there was now no time to answer; but she learned that her letter had been forwarded to Paris, while he was on the way to Gascony; where, however, at length, it informed him of her arrival in France; and he had immediately set out for Languedoc. On reaching the monastery, whence she had dated this letter, he found, to his extreme disappointment, that the gates were already closed for the night; and, believing that he should not see Emily till the morrow, he was returning to his little inn, with the intention of writing to her, when he was overtaken by Henri, with whom he had been intimate at Paris, and was led to her, whom he was secretly lamenting that he should not see till the following day.

Emily, with Valancourt and Henri, now

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returned to the green; where the latter presented Valancourt to the Count; who, she fancied, received him with less than his usual benignity, though it appeared that they were not strangers to each other. He was invited, however, to partake of the diversions of the evening; and, when he had paid his respects to the Count, and while the dancers continued their festivity, he seated himself by Emily, and conversed without restraint. The lights which were hung among the trees under which they sat, allowed her a more perfect view of the countenance she had so frequently in absence endeavoured to recollect, and she perceived, with some regret, that it was not the same as when last she saw it. There was all its wonted intelligence and fire; but it had lost much of the simplicity, and somewhat of the open benevolence, that used to characterise it. Still, however, it was an interesting countenance; but Emily thought she perceived, at intervals, anxiety contract, and melan-

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choly fix, the features of Valancourt: sometimes, too, he fell into a momentary musing, and then appeared anxious to dissipate thought; while, at others, as he fixed his eyes on Emily, a sudden kind of horror seemed to cross his mind. In her he perceived the same goodness and beautiful simplicity that had charmed him on their first acquaintance. The bloom of her countenance was somewhat faded, but all its sweetness remained; and it was rendered more interesting that ever, by the faint expression of melancholy that sometimes mingled with her smile.

At his request, she related the most important circumstances that had occurred to her since she left France; and emotions of pity and indignation alternately prevailed in his mind, when he heard how much she had suffered from the villainy of Montoni. More than once, when she was speaking of his conduct, of which the guilt was rather softened than exaggerated by her representation, he started from his

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seat and walked away, apparently overcome as much by self-accusation as by resentment. Her sufferings alone were mentioned in the few words which he could address to her; and he listened not to the account, which she was careful to give as distinctly as possible, of the present loss of Madame Montoni's estates, and of the little reason there was to expect their restoration. At length, Valancourt remained lost in thought, and then some secret cause seemed to overcome him with anguish. Again he abruptly left her. When he returned she perceived that he had been weeping, and tenderly begged that he would compose himself. "My sufferings are all passed now," said she; "for I have escaped from the tyranny of Montoni; and I see you well—let me also see you happy."

Valancourt was more agitated than before. "I am unworthy of you, Emily," said he; "I am unworthy of you;"—words, by his manner of uttering which, Emily was then more shocked than by

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their import. She fixed on him a mournful and inquiring eye. "Do not look thus on me," said he, turning away, and pressing her hand: "I cannot bear those looks."

"I would ask," said Emily, in a gentle, but agitated voice, "the meaning of your words, but I perceive that the question would distress you now. Let us talk on other subjects. To-morrow, perhaps, you may be more composed. Observe those moon-light woods, and the towers, which appear obscurely in the perspective. You used to be a great admirer of landscape; and I have heard you say, that the faculty of deriving consolation, under misfortune, from the sublime prospects which neither oppression nor poverty withold from us, was the peculiar blessing of the innocent." Valancourt was deeply affected. "Yes," replied he; "I had once a taste for innocent and elegant delights—I had once an uncorrupted heart!" Then checking himself, he added, "Do you remember our journey together in the Pyrenées?"

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"Can I forget it?" said Emily,——— "Would that I could!" he replied;— "that was the happiest period of my life: I then loved, with enthusiasm, whatever was truly great or good."—It was some time before Emily could repress her tears, and try to command her emotions. "If you wish to forget that journey," said she, "it must certainly be my wish to forget it also." She paused, and then added, "You make me very uneasy;—but this is not the time for further inquiry:—yet, how can I bear to believe, even for a moment, that you are less worthy of my esteem than formerly? I have still sufficient confidence in your candour, to believe, that, when I shall ask for an explanation, you will give it me."—"Yes," said Valancourt; "yes, Emily: I have not yet lost my candour: if I had, I could better have disguised my emotions, on learning what were your sufferings—your virtues; while I—I; but I will say no more: I did not mean to have said even so much—I have been surprised

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into the self-accusation. Tell me, Emily, that you will not forget that journey—will not wish to forget it, and I shall be tranquil. I would not lose the remembrance of it for the whole earth."

"How contradictory is this!" said Emily;—"but we may be over-heard. My recollection of it shall depend upon your's: I will endeavour to forget, or to recollect it, as you may do. Let us join the Count."—"Tell me, first," said Valancourt, "that you forgive the uneasiness I have occasioned you this evening, and that you will still love me."—"I sincerely forgive you," replied Emily. "You best know whether I shall continue to love you, for you know whether you deserve my esteem. At present, I will believe that you do. It is unnecessary to say," added she, observing his dejection, "how much pain it would give me to believe otherwise.—The young lady who approaches, is the Count's daughter."

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Valancourt and Emily now joined the Lady Blanche; and the party, soon after, sat down with the Count, his son, and the Chevalier Du Pont, at a banquet, spread under a gay awning beneath the trees. At a table also were seated several of the most venerable of the Count's tenants; and it was a festive repast—to all but Valancourt and Emily. When the Count retired to the château, he did not invite Valancourt to accompany him; who, therefore, took leave of Emily, and retired to his solitary inn for the night: meanwhile, she soon withdrew to her own apartment, where she mused, with deep anxiety and concern, on his behaviour, and on the Count's reception of him. Her attention was thus so wholly engaged, that she forgot Dorothée and her appointment, till morning was far advanced; when, knowing that the good old woman would not come, she retired, for a few hours, to repose.

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On the following day, when the Count had accidentally joined Emily in one of the walks, they talked of the festival of the preceding evening; and this led him to a mention of Valancourt. "That is a young man of talents," said he: "you were formerly acquainted with him, I perceive." Emily said that she was. "He was introduced to me at Paris," said the Count, "and I was much pleased with him, on our first acquaintance." He paused, and Emily trembled, between the desire of hearing more, and the fear of showing the Count that she felt an interest on the subject. "May I ask," said he, at length, "how long you have known Monsieur Valancourt?"—"Will you allow me to ask your reason for the question, sir?" said she; "and I will answer it immediately."—"Certainly," said the Count; "that is but just: I will tell you my reason. I cannot but perceive, that Monsieur Valancourt admires you. In that, however, there is nothing extraordinary: every per-

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son who sees you, must do the same. I am above using common-place compliments: I speak with sincerity. What I fear, is, that he is a favoured admirer!"——"Why do you fear it, sir?" said Emily, endeavouring to conceal her emotion.—"Because," replied the Count, "I think him not worthy of your favour." Emily, greatly agitated, entreated further explanation. "I will give it," said he, "if you will believe, that nothing but a strong interest in your welfare could induce me to hazard that assertion."—"I must believe so, sir," replied Emily.

"But let us rest under these trees," continued the Count, observing the paleness of her countenance: "here is a seat—you are fatigued." They sat down; and the Count proceeded—"Many young ladies, circumstanced as you are, would think my conduct, on this occasion, and on so short an acquaintance, impertinent, instead of friendly: from what I have observed of your temper and understanding, I do not

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fear such a return from you: our acquaintance has been short, but long enough to make me esteem you, and feel a lively interest in your happiness. You deserve to be very happy, and I trust that you will be so." Emily sighed softly, and bowed her thanks. The Count paused again. "I am unpleasantly circumstanced," said he; "but an opportunity of rendering you important service shall overcome inferior considerations. Will you inform me of the manner of your first acquaintance with the Chevalier Valancourt, if the subject is not too painful?"

Emily briefly related the accident of their meeting in the presence of her father; and then so earnestly entreated the Count not to hesitate in declaring what he knew, that he perceived the violent emotion against which she was contending; and, regarding her with a look of tender compassion, considered how he might communicate his information with least pain to his anxious auditor.

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"The Chevalier and my son," said he, "were introduced to each other, at the table of a brother officer; at whose house I also met him, and invited him to my own, whenever he should be disengaged. I did not then know that he had formed an acquaintance with a set of men, a disgrace to their species, who live by plunder, and pass their lives in continual debauchery. I knew several of the Chevalier's family resident at Paris, and considered them as sufficient pledges for his introduction to my own. But you are ill;—I will leave the subject."—"No, sir," said Emily; "I beg you will proceed: I am only distressed"—"*Only!*" said the Count, with emphasis. "However, I will proceed. I soon learned, that these, his associates, had drawn him into a course of dissipation, from which he appeared to have neither the power, nor the inclination, to extricate himself. He lost large sums at the gaming-table: he became infatuated with play; and was ruined. I spoke tenderly of this to his friends, who

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assured me that they had remonstrated with him till they were weary. I afterwards learned, that in consideration of his talents for play, which were generally successful when unopposed by the tricks of villainy—that in consideration of these, the party had initiated him into the secrets of their trade, and allotted him a share of their profits."—"Impossible!" said Emily suddenly;—"but—pardon me, sir; I scarcely know what I say;—allow for the distress of my mind. I must, indeed I must, believe, that you have not been truly informed: the Chevalier had, doubtless, enemies, who misrepresented him."—"I should be most happy to believe so," replied the Count; "but I cannot. Nothing short of conviction, and a regard for your welfare, could have urged me to repeat these unpleasant reports."

Emily was silent. She recollected Valancourt's sayings, on the preceding evening, which discovered the pangs of self-reproach, and seemed to confirn all that

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the Count had related. Yet she had not fortitude enough to dare conviction: her heart was overwhelmed with anguish at the mere suspicion of his guilt, and she could not endure a belief of it. After a long silence, the Count said,—"I perceive, and can allow for, your want of conviction. It is necessary I should give some proof of what I have asserted; but this I cannot do, without subjecting one, who is very dear to me, to danger."—"What is the danger you apprehend, sir?" said Emily. "If I can prevent it, you may safely confide in my honour."—"On your honour I am certain I can rely," said the Count; "but can I trust your fortitude? Do you think you can resist the solicitation of a favoured admirer, when he pleads, in affliction, for the name of one who has robbed him of a blessing?"—"I shall not be exposed to such a temptation, sir," said Emily, with modest pride; "for I cannot favour one whom I must no longer esteem. I, however, readily give my word." Tears, in the mean

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time, contradicted her first assertion; and she felt, that time and effort only could eradicate an affection, which had been formed on virtuous esteem, and cherished by habit and difficulty.

"I will trust you then," said the Count; "for conviction is necessary to your future peace, and cannot, I perceive, be obtained without this confidence. My son has too often been an eye-witness of the Chevalier's ill conduct: he was very near being drawn in by it: he was, indeed, drawn in to the commission of many follies, but I rescued him from guilt and destruction. Judge then, Mademoiselle St. Aubert, whether a father, who had nearly lost his only son by the example of the Chevalier, has not, from conviction, reason to warn those whom he esteems against trusting their happiness in such hands. I have myself seen the Chevalier engaged in deep play with men whom I almost shuddered to look upon. If you still doubt, I will refer you to my son."

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"I must not doubt what you have yourself witnessed," replied Emily, sinking with grief, "or what you assert. But the Chevalier has, perhaps, been drawn only into a transient folly, which he may never repeat. If you had known the justness of his former principles, you would allow for my present incredulity."

"Alas!" observed the Count, "it is difficult to believe that which will make us wretched. But I will not soothe you by flattering and false hopes. We all know how fascinating the vice of gaming is, and how difficult it is, also, to conquer habit. The Chevalier, might, perhaps, reform for a while; but he would soon relapse into dissipation—for, I fear, not only the bonds of habit would be powerful, but that his morals are corrupted. And—why should I conceal from you, that play is not his only vice?—he appears to have a taste for every vicious pleasure."

The Count hesitated, and paused; while Emily endeavoured to support herself, as,

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with increasing perturbation, she expected what he might further say, A long pause of silence ensued, during which he was visibly agitated: at length, he said, "It would be a cruel delicacy that could prevail with me to be silent—and I will inform you, that the Chevalier's extravagance has brought him twice into the prisons of Paris; from whence he was last extricated, as I was told upon authority which I cannot doubt, by a well-known Parisian Countess, with whom he continued to reside when I left Paris."

He paused again; and, looking at Emily, perceived her countenance change, and that she was falling from the seat: he caught her; but she had fainted, and he called loudly for aid. They were, however, beyond the hearing of his servants at the chateau, and he feared to leave her while he went thither for assistance, yet knew not how otherwise to obtain it; till a fountain at no great distance caught his eye, and he endeavoured to support Emily

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against the tree under which she had been sitting, while he went thither for water. Again he was perplexed, for he had nothing near him in which water could be brought; but while, with increased anxiety, he watched her, he thought he perceived in her countenance symptoms of returning life.

It was long, however, before she revived, and then she found herself supported—not by the Count—but by Valancourt, who was observing her with looks of earnest apprehension, and who now spoke to her in a tone tremulous with his anxiety. At the sound of his well-known voice, she raised her eyes; but presently closed them, and a faintness again came over her.

The Count, with a look somewhat stern, waved him to withdraw; but he only sighed heavily, and called on the name of Emily, as he again held the water, that had been brought, to her lips. On the Count's repeating his action, and accompanying it with words, Valancourt answered him with

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a look of deep resentment, and refused to leave the place till she should revive, or to resign her for a moment to the care of any person. In the next instant, his conscience seemed to inform him of what had been the subject of the Count's conversation with Emily, and indignation flashed in his eyes: but it was quickly repressed, and succeeded by an expression of serious anguish, that induced the Count to regard him with more pity than resentment, and the view of which so much affected Emily, when she again revived, that she yielded to the weakness of tears: but she soon restrained them; and, exerting her resolution to appear recovered, she rose, thanked the Count and Henri, with whom Valancourt had entered the garden, for their care, and moved towards the château, without noticing Valancourt; who, heart-struck by her manner, exclaimed in a low voice—"Good God! how have I deserved this?—what has been said to occasion this change?"

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Emily, without replying, but with increased emotion, quickened her steps. "What has thus disordered you, Emily?" said he, as he still walked by her side: "give me a few moments' conversation, I entreat you;—I am very miserable!"

Though this was spoken in a low voice, it was overheard by the Count; who immediately replied, that Mademoiselle St. Aubert was then too much indisposed to attend to any conversation, but that he would venture to promise she would see Monsieur Valancourt on the morrow, if she was better.

Valancourt's cheek was crimsoned: he looked haughtily at the Count, and then at Emily with successive expression of surprise, grief, and supplication, which she could neither misunderstand nor resist, and she said languidly—"I shall be better to-morrow; and, if you wish to accept the Count's permission, I will see you then."

"See me!" exclaimed Valancourt, as he threw a glance of mingled pride and

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resentment upon the Count; and then, seeming to recollect himself, he added—"But I will come, madam; I will accept the Count's *permission.*"

When they reached the door of the château, he lingered a moment, for his resentment was now fled; and then, with a look so expressive of tenderness and grief that Emily's heart was not proof against it, he bade her good-morning, and, bowing slightly to the Count, disappeared.

Emily withdrew to her own apartment, under such oppression of heart as she had seldom known; when she endeavoured to recollect all that the Count had told, to examine the probability of the circumstances he himself believed, and to consider of her future conduct towards Valancourt. But when she attempted to think, her mind refused controul, and she could only feel that she was miserable. One moment, she sunk under the conviction that Valancourt was no longer the same whom she had so tenderly loved—the idea of

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whom had hitherto supported her under affliction, and cheered her with the hope of happier days — but a fallen, a worthless character, whom she must teach herself to despise—if she could not forget: then, unable to endure this terrible supposition, she rejected it, and disdained to believe him capable of conduct such as the Count had described; to whom she believed he had been misrepresented by some artful enemy: and there were moments, when she even ventured to doubt the integrity of the Count himself, and to suspect, that he was influenced by some selfish motive, to break her connection with Valancourt. But this was the error of an instant only: the Count's character, which she had heard spoken of by Du Pont and many other persons, and had herself observed, enabled her to judge, and forbade the supposition: had her confidence, indeed, been less, there appeared to be no temptation to betray him into conduct so treacherous, and so cruel. Nor did re-

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flexion suffer her to preserve the hope that Valancourt had been misrepresented to the Count, who had said, that he spoke chiefly from his own observation, and from his son's experience. She must part from Valancourt, therefore, for ever!—for what of either happiness or tranquillity could she expect, with a man whose tastes were degenerated into low inclinations, and to whom vice was become habitual? whom she must no longer esteem, though the remembrance of what he once was, and the long habit of loving him, would render it very difficult for her to despise him!

"O Valancourt!" she would exclaim, "having been separated so long, do we meet only to be miserable!—only to part for ever!"

Amidst all the tumult of her mind, she remembered pertinaciously the seeming candour and simplicity of his conduct on the preceeding night; and, had she dared to trust her own heart, it would have led her to hope much from this. Still she

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could not resolve to dismiss him for ever, without obtaining further proof of his ill conduct; yet she saw no probability of procuring it—if, indeed, proof more positive was possible. Something, however, it was necessary to decide upon; and she almost determined to be guided in her opinion, solely by the manner with which Valancourt should receive her hints concerning his late conduct.

Thus passed the hours till dinner-time; when Emily, struggling against the pressure of her grief, dried her tears, and joined the family at table; where the Count preserved towards her the most delicate attention; but the Countess and Mademoiselle Bearn having looked, for a moment, with surprise, on her dejected countenance, began, as usual, to talk of trifles; while the eyes of Lady Blanche asked much of her friend, who could only reply by a mournful smile.

Emily withdrew as soon after dinner as possible, and was followed by the Lady

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Blanche; whose anxious inquiries, however, she found herself quite unequal to answer, and whom she entreated to spare her on the subject of her distress. To converse on any topic, was now, indeed, so extremely painful to her, that she soon gave up the attempt; and Blanche left her, with pity of the sorrow which she perceived she had no power to assuage.

Emily secretly determined to go to her convent in a day or two; for company, especially that of the Countess and Mademoiselle Bearn, was intolerable to her, in the present state of her spirits: and, in the retirement of the convent, as well as the kindness of the abbess, she hoped to recover the command of her mind, and to teach it resignation to the event which, she too plainly perceived, was approaching.

To have lost Valancourt by death, or to have seen him married to a rival, would, she thought, have given her less anguish, than a conviction of his unworthiness, which must terminate in misery to himself,

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and which robbed her even of the solitary image her heart so long had cherished. These painful reflexions were interrupted, for a moment, by a note from Valancourt, written in evident distraction of mind, entreating that she would permit him to see her on the approaching evening, instead of the following morning—a request which occasioned her so much agitation, that she was unable to answer it: she wished to see him, and to terminate her present state of suspense, yet shrunk from the interview; and, incapable of deciding for herself, she, at length, sent to beg a few moments' conversation with the Count in his library; where she delivered to him the note, and requested his advice. After reading it, he said, that, if she believed herself well enough to support the interview, his opinion was, that, for the relief of both parties, it ought to take place that evening. "His affection for you cannot be doubted," added the Count; "and he appears so much distressed, and you, my amiable

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friend, are so ill at ease—that the sooner the affair is decided, the better."

Emily replied, therefore, to Valancourt, that she would see him; and then exerted herself in endeavours to attain fortitude and composure to bear her through the approaching scene—a scene so afflictingly the reverse of any to which she had looked forward!

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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